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RALEIGH'S "TOP 10" MAGNIFICENT MUSEUMS

RALEIGH, N.C. (March 2008) – North Carolina's capital city boasts an eclectic collage of culture. This unique concentration of museums has rendered Raleigh the nickname, *Smithsonian of the South*.

African American Cultural Complex (AACC)

The African American Cultural Complex displays a collection that recounts the story of African-American contributions. One permanent exhibit highlights everyday items that were invented or that include components of inventions made by African-Americans, including an ice cream cone, a bottle of peanut oil and an eggbeater. A replica of the Amistad slave ship is on display year-round, although it shines each July during the annual production of *The Amistad Saga: Reflections*, the *only* outdoor drama *written, produced and directed* by and about African Americans in the U.S. *Admission to the museum is free; there is a charge for the Amistad performance.* www.aaccmuseum.org

Marbles Kids Museum and Wachovia IMAX Theatre

A hands-on interactive museum that inspires children to pretend, use their imagination, be curious, try out their creativity and simply have fun! Visit Marbles Kids Museum where an otherwise ordinary day will become an extraordinary adventure! The museum will be hosting the special exhibit *Five Friends from Japan* through June 29, 2008. This exhibit offers an intimate look into young Japanese culture. Designed for children ages 5 – 12 and their families, the exhibit invites visitors into the daily lives of five Japanese children. The Wachovia IMAX Theatre, NC's only 3D IMAX theatre, provides a medium to introduce new places, new people and new ideas to visitors of all ages. *Admission charged.* www.marbleskidsmuseum.org

Legends of Harley Drag Racing Museum

Ray Price is quick to escort you to the museum floor – just upstairs from one of the East Coast’s largest Harley dealership! More than six decades of American motorcycle history are on display, with Harley Davidson bikes representing each era from 1936 to the present, both in original and restored condition. *Admission is free.* **www.rayprice.com**

Mordecai Historic Park

Mordecai Historic Park was once the heart of an extensive antebellum plantation. Surrounding Mordecai House--the park's Greek Revival house museum--are other historic structures including the birthplace of Andrew Johnson, 17th President of the United States. These buildings, relocated from Raleigh and the surrounding area for preservation efforts, are grouped together in a “village street” setting and provide a unique glimpse into 19th-century Raleigh life. Mordecai Historic Park is also home to the Raleigh Trolley Tours which run every Saturday, March through December. *Admission charged.* **www.raleighnc.gov**

North Carolina Museum of Art

This museum houses 5,000 years of artistic heritage, from ancient Egypt to the present. The collection of Renaissance and Baroque paintings, with works by Van Dyck, Jan Brueghel and Raphael, is internationally recognized. Significant American paintings include works by John Singleton Copley, Winslow Homer and Georgia O’Keeffe. Also represented are collections of African, Oceanic, New World, Egyptian, Greek and Roman, 20th-century and Jewish ceremonial art. Feature exhibits include *Far from Home* through July 13, 2008 which includes art that addresses the global displacement of people and populations as they relocate for economic, political, or other reason and *Modern America Paintings from the Bequest of Fannie and Alan Leslie*. *Modern America Paintings* showcases 13 paintings including major works by leading Southern California modernists Stanton Macdonald-Wright, Hans Burkhardt, and Lee Mullican.

Ranging in date from the 1850s to the early twentieth century, the works presented offer a broad survey of landscape painting as practiced by such leading French artists as Gustave Courbet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, and Claude Monet and their most significant American counterparts including Childe Hassam and John Singer Sargent. *Admission to the museum and the permanent collection is free. There is a charge for select special exhibitions.* www.ncartmuseum.org

North Carolina Museum of History & North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame

The North Carolina Museum of History's collection contains more than 250,000 artifacts representing the state's rich heritage, with exhibits on agriculture, politics, folk life and more. With several changing exhibits ranging from *Rhythm and Roots of North Carolina Music* to *From Horses to Horsepower* it isn't hard to make an intriguing new discovery. **ArtDuckO: Waterfowl Culture in North Carolina** opened in March and features decoys and other objects associated with waterfowl hunting and conservation in North Carolina, as well as Audubon prints, photographs, and a flock of "ducky" artifacts.

Located within the North Carolina Museum of History, the **North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame** displays personal items donated by many of the 200 inductees. From Richard Petty's #43 racecar to Charlie "Choo Choo" Justice's #22 football jersey, this exhibit is a treat for all sports fans. *Admission is free.* www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences

The North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences includes 70,000 square feet of walk-through environments. Four floors of exhibits feature four great whales, the world's only *Acrocanthosaurus* – better known as the "Terror of the South" – and Willo, the dinosaur with a fossilized heart! Several live animals are also included in exhibits. Exhibits at the museum typically look at the natural world through the distinct lens of North Carolina's diverse geography, geology, plants and animals.

One of the museum's most popular annual events is **BugFest!**, the nation's largest single-day bug event. From June 28 to December 28, 2008 the museum will host *Dead Sea Scrolls*, an

exhibit showcasing one of the greatest archaeological treasures ever discovered. *Museum admission is free; special exhibits may charge.* www.naturalsciences.org

North Carolina Railroad Museum

Visitors to the North Carolina Railroad Museum are invited to view the collection of train equipment, including a recently restored Vulcan Tank Steam Locomotive. The equipment on display at the museum is available for viewing during normal daylight hours – however, the museum is only staffed on Work Days, Train Ride Days and Group Ride Days. To ride the rails, catch a one-hour adventure from Bonsal to New Hill and back. From May through November, guests can board the train the first Sunday of each month. Special holiday trains including the spooky “*Halloween Express*” in October and “*Christmas Train*” featuring Santa in December are always a hit. A feature attraction called *Operate-a-loco* offers participants the unique opportunity to practice the safe operation and handling of a locomotive and will be allowed to operate the engine for one hour under the supervision of one of our qualified engineers.

Admission charged for train rides only. www.nhvry.org

Raleigh City Museum

After 200 years of North Carolina’s capital city having no repository for its cultural artifacts and no place to preserve its past, the city opened its first exhibit in 1993. Since then, the Raleigh City Museum has dedicated itself to helping people understand the city’s present through knowledge of its past by collecting, preserving and interpreting materials pertaining to Raleigh’s unique history and culture. Through June 2008, *The Thrill of Victory: Sports & Recreation in Greater Raleigh* will highlight important players and milestones that have made an impact on the city’s sports history. *Admission is free.* www.raleighcitymuseum.org

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