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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TOAST OF OHIO RETURNS TO SANDUSKY
Sixth-annual Festival Celebrates Lake Erie Shores & Islands® Heritage
As Nation's Largest Wine-Producing Region Prior to Prohibition

LAKE ERIE SHORES & ISLANDS, OHIO, July 2009 – To celebrate its heritage as the largest wine-producing region in the nation prior to Prohibition, Ohio's Lake Erie Shores & Islands will again serve as host to the Toast of Ohio wine heritage festival. The sixth annual event takes place on Saturday, August 15, 2009, from 11 am – 8 pm at the Sandusky Bay Pavilion (605 East Water Street) at Meigs and Water streets in Sandusky. The Ohio Grape Industries Committee is the primary sponsor of the event, which would not be possible without their assistance.

A variety of musical entertainment and family fun activities will occur throughout the festival. The Maritime Museum of Sandusky and the Merry-Go-Round Museum, co-sponsors of the festival, will host tours and activities. In addition, a popular feature from last year's festival will return with six artists exhibiting various works during the event. Works may include pottery, painting, wood carving, sculpture, jewelry and blown glass.

What's quality wine without quality food? Gourmet samples from local restaurants will be available throughout the day, including hot appetizers, fabulous entrees and various delectable desserts.

There is a \$1.00 admission fee for this first-class event, which will feature fifteen Ohio wineries. Admission fees will benefit the sponsor museums. Tickets will be available to purchase for exchange of wine tastings and food purchases. Wine tasting tickets are four for \$3.00 and glass pours will vary by vendor. Food offerings will range from \$1.00 - \$5.00. Ticket packages – including a combination of food tickets and wine tickets – also will be available for purchase – ranging from \$8.00 to \$20.00. The \$20.00 package includes ten food tickets, ten wine tastings, and a souvenir wine glass. Wine related merchandise and souvenirs will be sold separately.

The Lake Erie Shores & Islands once featured huge vineyards that spread from east of Sandusky to the western region near the bay because of the lakeshore climate. The *Toast of Ohio* event was developed to celebrate the area's winemaking heritage. Today, a handful of wineries still operate in the region.

Other event sponsors include *Lake Erie Living Magazine*, Lake Erie Shores & Islands, the City of Sandusky, and Sandusky Main Street Association. Additional details, including participating wineries and restaurants, will be released as the event nears.

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