



## **"Hootin' Andy's Safety Train Brain Station" Opens at The Children's Museum of Memphis Thanks to CN**

**MEMPHIS, TN - (September 3, 2009):**

A new interactive railroad safety exhibit featuring the voice of American folk singer Arlo Guthrie has opened at The Children's Museum of Memphis. Made possible by a generous gift from CN, one of the largest railroads in North America, and developed in partnership with Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center, the Safety Train Brain Station features a talking owl named Hootin' Andy, plus a recreated railroad crossing with gates, lights and a drop-down screen to teach children the importance of train safety. Arlo Guthrie provides the voice of Hootin' Andy, the wise owl that teaches children the rules of railroad safety.

Hootin' Andy, a very wise owl, warns kids that a train is approaching. He begins with an original train safety song. At the end of the song, children hear a loud train whistle. The two railroad crossing gates begin to flash their lights and ring their bells. The arms lower along with a large projection screen, blocking visitors from crossing the railroad tracks on the floor. The sound of the train and the whistles build. Suddenly, the train appears, zooming through the crossing, carrying its long payload. Then, as suddenly as it appeared, the train is gone. Andy then leads visitors in a sing-a-long. Children may then take the train safety quiz to see how much they learned.

The exhibit, which opened at the end of August, was made possible through a \$1 million gift from CN to Le Bonheur. A portion of the gift was used to create the Safety Train Brain Station exhibit while the

balance went toward the campaign to build the new Le Bonheur scheduled to open in 2010. CN and Le Bonheur partnered with The Children's Museum of Memphis to reach the museum's far-reaching audience. The Children's Museum has welcomed more than 2.7 million visitors from Memphis and across the country.

Jim Vena, CN's senior vice president, southern region said, "As a leading North American freight transportation company, CN is committed to helping build stronger communities to provide a healthier and safer environment for our youth. Our goal is to help save lives and prevent injuries at railroad crossings and on or near our rail lines. We are very pleased that this exhibit will help children learn life-saving lessons and reinforce rules that must never be forgotten or ignored."

A key element of the Safety Train Brain Station is the question and answer game that takes children through railroad safety rules. Hootin' Andy asks children questions to help them think about train safety.

For example, Hootin' Andy asks, "How far back should you stay from a passing train?" Three options appear on the screen:

- A. Far enough that you can't hear it choo-choo its gum
- B. 1 Baby Step
- C. 10 Giant Steps

Each child will push a button to record his or her answer before Andy replies, "You should stand at least 10 giant steps back from a crossing train. That's 15 feet."

According to Safe Kids USA, there were 744 fatalities and 1,372 injuries in railroad crossing and trespassing incidents across the United States in 2008. Almost 150 of these incidents involved children under the age of 14. Susan Helms, director of injury prevention and Safe Kids Mid-South at Le Bonheur, said, "Children don't realize that trains can't stop as quickly as cars can. It can take more than a mile - or 20 football fields - for a train to stop. That's why it's so important to teach children in a fun environment how dangerous trains can be if you don't follow certain rules."



About CN: CN has been promoting railroad safety for more than 25 years through its All Aboard for Safety community education program. Every year, CN Police officers make hundreds of All Aboard for Safety presentations and talk to more than 300,000 children and adults at schools and community events in the United States and Canada about the importance of safety and the dangers of walking and playing on or near train tracks. Part of the strength of this program is the collaborative relationship with major community safety partners: Operation Lifesaver, Safe Kids Canada, Safe Communities Canada, SMARTRISK and Mothers Against

Drunk Driving (MADD). CN - Canadian National Railway Company and its operating railway subsidiaries - spans Canada and mid-America, from the Atlantic and Pacific oceans to the Gulf of Mexico, serving the ports of Vancouver, Prince Rupert, B.C., Montreal, Halifax, New Orleans, and Mobile, Ala., and the key metropolitan areas of Toronto, Buffalo, Chicago, Detroit, Duluth, Minn./Superior, Wis., Green Bay, Wis., Minneapolis/St. Paul, Memphis, St. Louis, and Jackson, Miss., with connections to all points in North America.



About Le Bonheur: Founded in 1952, Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center is the Mid-South's first and only comprehensive pediatric medical facility. Every year Le Bonheur treats almost 140,000 children from 47 states and many countries. Le Bonheur is home to one of the nation's 10 busiest pediatric emergency departments and hosts one of the largest pediatric surgical brain tumor programs. Le Bonheur is building a new state-of-the-art hospital. The \$327-million facility is scheduled to open in 2010 and will significantly increase the space for patient care, research and teaching. For more information, please call 901-287-6030 or visit [www.lebonheur.org](http://www.lebonheur.org).

## About The Children's Museum of Memphis

A private, nonprofit organization, The Children's Museum of Memphis (CMOM) creates memorable learning experiences through the joy of play in hands-on exhibits and programs. Core values: the intersection of play and hands-on learning; a positive impact on the community; a positive family experience; a complement to classroom education; inclusiveness; excellent customer service; nurturing appropriate partnerships in the community; and following the best practices of the children's museum field.

The Children's Museum of Memphis has an annual economic impact of \$6 million on the local Memphis economy.

Location: 2525 Central Avenue. Hours: Monday-Saturday, 9am-5pm, and Sunday, 12 noon-5pm. Admission: \$10 ages 1-100 and free for museum members and children under one. Information: 901-458-2678. Website: [CMOM.COM](http://CMOM.COM) has current information.

You can also check out the News Room page at [CMOM.COM](http://CMOM.COM)

to access news releases and the general media kit for the museum.