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411 South Wells Street, Suite 800 • Chicago, Illinois 60607
tel 312.939.0490 • fax 312.939.0931 • www.chicagoriver.org

MEDIA CONTACT:

Colleen Correll
312-558-1770, ext. 145
ccorrell@pcipr.com

*9th Annual Big Fish Ball Raises More Than
\$250,000 to Benefit Chicago River Restoration*

CHICAGO (June 9, 2014) – On Thursday evening, June 5, 500 community leaders gathered at the Merchandise Mart’s Riverside Drive for the 9th Annual Big Fish Ball, held by Friends of the Chicago River to aid their work in restoring the Chicago River.

Business professionals, philanthropists, politicians, environmentalists and community members enjoyed elegant outdoor dining and an after party boat cruise. The event raised more than \$250,000 to help restore and protect the river. The 2014 Big Fish Ball presenting sponsor was Here: A Nokia Company.

“It was tremendous to see so many prominent members of our community enjoying themselves along the river and learning more about its important role in our region’s economy and environment,” said Margaret Frisbie, Friends’ executive director. “We are thrilled that the river is finally recognized as the community asset it is.”

Prominent guests included Illinois Governor Pat Quinn; Debra Shore, commissioner, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District; Patrick Thompson, commissioner, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District; David St. Pierre, executive director, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District; Arnold Randall, general superintendent, Forest Preserves of Cook County; David Reynolds, commissioner, City of Chicago; Erin Lavin Cabonargi, executive director, Public Building Commission; Karen Alber, chief information officer, MillerCoors; Aaron Block, chief executive officer, BayRu; Pat Cermak, chief executive officer, Wight & Company; Matt Collopy, chief executive officer, Shoreline Sightseeing Company; Grant Crowley, chief executive officer, Crowley’s Yacht Yard; Sally Fletcher, chief executive officer, Fletcher Chicago; Larry Kaplan, chief executive officer, Eudora Global; Christopher Lee of Johnson & Lee Architects; Myron Maurer, chief operating officer, Merchandise Mart Properties; Marty Ozinga, chief executive officer, Ozinga Chicago; Greg Van Schaack, senior managing director, Hines.

Stacey A. Hasenbalg, associate general counsel and U.S. regulatory liaison at BMO Financial Group, and James C. Mark, Jr., vice president of architecture and Chicago office director at Wight & Company, and served as the 2014 gala co-chairs.

Several furry and feathered friends that call the river home attended as well, including wolves, a skunk, a groundhog, a great horned owl, an American kestrel and a red-tailed hawk. Guests were able to interact with the animals and to learn more about how sustaining their habitat is crucial to their survival.

“The guests were fascinated with the animals; it was one of the evening’s highlights,” Frisbie said.

Guests were treated to a delicious dinner by Stefani Signature caterers that included an arugula and grilled peach salad; pecan crusted chicken; chick pea b’stilla; and a southern trio of a mini peach cobbler, an all-grown-up s’more and a caramel pecan tartlet, while the beauty of the Chicago River and the skyline provided the perfect backdrop.

The evening also included the “Blue Ribbon Awards,” a program developed to inspire and reward river-sensitive designs that protect and improve public access, water quality, and habitat along the Chicago and Calumet river systems. The winners included: site design group, ltd. and the Chicago Park District for the Ping Tom Memorial Park Boathouse; the Chicago Public Schools, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago and Chicago Department of Water Management for Space to Grow: Greening Chicago Schoolyards; the Public Building Commission of Chicago for the Ping Tom Memorial Park Fieldhouse; and Studio Gang Architects for the WMS Boathouse at Clark Park.

The Big Fish Ball coincides with Friends’ Think! Beyond the Banks campaign, launched in partnership with the Wrigley Company Foundation, as an environmental initiative to bring appreciation to this important metropolitan water way and encourage community involvement each day.

“Events like this show the impact this beautiful river has on our community,” said Maureen Jones, executive director of the Wrigley Company Foundation. “The Wrigley Company Foundation is proud to support Friends’ efforts to protect the Chicago River for our community and the abundant wildlife it supports.”

Nestled between the iconic Wells Street and Franklin Street bridge houses, the festivities remained lively as they carried on into the night. With the sun fading, guests climbed aboard the waiting river boat for an after-party cruise to Ping Tom Memorial Park, where they were treated to a surprise performance by the Chinese Fine Arts Society, artfully lit by DesignLab Chicago. The performance was the perfect cap to an evening celebrating the true beauty of one of Chicago’s most prominent symbols, the Chicago River.

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About Friends of the Chicago River

Celebrating its 35th anniversary this year, Friends of the Chicago River is an award winning nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve and protect the Chicago River for people, plants and animals. With over 5,000 members, volunteers, and online advocates, Friends works to make the river greener and more accessible, while building awareness of the benefits that a clean, healthy river can bring to the surrounding community. Friends of the Chicago River is working to make the Chicago River one of the world’s great metropolitan rivers. For more information on Think! Beyond the Banks and Friends of the Chicago River, please visit our website www.chicagoriver.org.

About the Wrigley Company Foundation

The mission of the Wrigley Company Foundation is to help improve the health of people and our planet through sustainable initiatives, including those focused on environmental stewardship, as well as local needs that ensure a healthy community. Since its founding in 1987, the Wrigley Company Foundation has donated more than \$60 million to charitable organizations improving lives around the world. For more information, visit www.wrigley.com and www.mars.com.