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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gearing up for another tourism season in the Valley

(Pembroke) - Over the past few months the Ottawa Valley Tourist Association (OVTA) has been gearing up for another successful tourism season in the Valley. From attending trade shows, to developing and distributing tourism publications, to planning various marketing and media initiatives – the staff of the OVTA have been busy.

During the winter and spring months, staff attended more than 10 consumer trade shows in Ottawa, Toronto, Montréal and locally, reaching more than 400,000 potential visitors. Trade shows continue to be on the most effective marketing tools for promoting and informing travelers about Ontario's Adventure Playground.

For the first time this year, the OVTA and the City of Pembroke – a National Communities in Bloom winner – partnered to attend the Canada Blooms show in Toronto. This popular garden show featured a travel and tourism pavilion, aimed at attracting the mature and affluent travelers. This show was a huge success, reaching more than 90,000 potential new visitors.

In the fall, the OVTA will partner with the City of Pembroke and the Towns of Petawawa and Deep River to attend the Toronto International Snowmobile, ATV & Powersports and OFSC GO Snowmobiling Shows.

The 2008 Ottawa Valley Travel Guide and Road Map hit the streets in early February. The Travel Guide, which includes more than 200 tourism business listings, is a key resource for planning any Ottawa Valley vacation. Accommodations, attractions, restaurants, festivals and events and resource information are all readily available at the turn of a page. The Road Map that accompanies the guide will surely get any visitor where they need to go when setting out on the roads.

Due to popular demand, the OVTA also released the 2nd edition of the Paddle Routes of the Ottawa Valley guide. This guide features more than 25 paddling routes – both flat and whitewater – found throughout the Ottawa Valley. Route descriptions, classification of rapids, put-ins, take-outs, as well as the wildlife one can expect to see along the way are all included.

From launching media campaigns to creating unique marketing initiatives, the OVTA has a number of ways to spread the tourism word about the Valley.

Earlier this year, a series of commercials aired on WPBS-TV for 13 weeks. Through buy-in from the OVTA membership, the Ottawa Valley was prominently portrayed as a summer vacation destination to more than 650,000 viewers in Eastern Ontario and New York State.

Additionally, with funding from the Buy Local Initiative and the Trillium Foundation, the OVTA and its membership recently launched the **“Be A Tourist In Your Own Backyard”** campaign with myFM radio. Over the course of 8 weeks in June and July, commercials will be heard on myFM radio in Pembroke & Petawawa (104.9 fm), Renfrew (96.1 fm) and Arnprior (107.7 fm) urging listeners to be local tourists this summer. Through the OVTA's continued partnership with A-Channel, commercials are also airing on the local network throughout the month of June.

Continuing to promote the Whitewater Capital of Canada message, four national travel writers are currently in the Valley learning how to whitewater kayak with Wilderness Tours, MKC & OWL Rafting and Esprit Rafting.

During the week of June 23rd, the OVTA and Renfrew County Visitor Information Centre staff will be on the road visiting and experiencing tourism businesses and attractions in preparation for the opening of the centres on the July long weekend.

Whether promoting locally or externally, through print or broadcast, the OVTA is continuously working to enhance the Ottawa Valley's presence in the tourism marketplace. Numerous other campaigns and initiatives are currently underway and planned for the future; stay tuned to find out.

The Ottawa Valley Tourist Association is the Ottawa Valley's official destination marketing organization, proudly representing more than 220 tourism businesses and suppliers. For more information about the OVTA or how your business can become a member, visit www.ottawavalley.org or call 1.800.757.6580.

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