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FRIENDS OF HUDSON RIVER PARK ANNOUNCES OPENING OF HUDSON RIVER PARK'S PIER 64

Friends of Hudson River Park announces the opening of Hudson River Park's Pier 64, a new open space in the five-mile west side waterfront park stretching from 59th Street to the Battery. Located at 24th Street and rising fifteen feet above the bulkhead at its far western end, Pier 64 offers broad views of the river and New York Harbor. Its sloping lawns, extending from 26th Street south and west to the pier head line, provide additional areas for recreation and relaxation.

Pier 64 is notable for its unique location at a bend in the Hudson River on an angle aligned with 24th Street. Fittingly so, its opening coincides with the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial's year-long celebration. This celebration, marked with activities throughout New York State and its many communities during 2009, commemorates the dual 400th anniversaries of Henry Hudson's expedition to sail up the river that bears his name and Samuel de Champlain's discovery of the namesake lake, as well as the 200th anniversary of Robert Fulton's maiden journey up the Hudson River on the first successful steamboat.

From May through November, Friends will participate in the Quadricentennial celebration by offering boat rides, sunset concerts and family events designed to encourage people to visit the five-mile portion of the Hudson River waterfront that is included in Hudson River Park.

According to Executive Director A.J. Pietrantone, "The opening of Pier 64 this month is significant for many reasons. Not only is it the only new portion of Hudson River Park to come on line during the Quadricentennial, but also it establishes the fact that despite the weak economy, the largest New York park project in over 150 years is continuing as planned. In addition, the Pier will be instrumental in enhancing the Chelsea neighborhood by providing more direct access to the waterfront and also by creating continuity throughout this segment of the park that includes both the Chelsea Piers Sports and Entertainment Complex and Chelsea Waterside Park. "

Pier 64 is part of the Chelsea Cove section of the Park that, when completed, will include Piers 62 and 63, now under construction, and scheduled to open in 2010. These two restored piers and upland sections will feature a carousel, a skate park facility, a three-acre lawn bowl, gardens, and a wide esplanade that will complete public river access from 19th to 30th Streets.

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Friends of Hudson River Park, a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) organization, is the only community-based organization dedicated exclusively to the entire Hudson River Park. Celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2009, Friends represents thousands of organizations and individuals who share its mission of creating and preserving this world-class park for everyone.