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To Whom It May Concern:

Emmett Miller is quite possibly the hardest working public entertainer and historic educator I've ever worked with. This wholly genuine observation comes from my own 20 years of museum work, both as a volunteer and as site staff at several major historic sites.

For the past two years, Emmett Miller has worked the 1863 Summer Fair venue at the Wauconda Civil War Days event. As the largest Civil War event in Illinois, our venue saw over 4000 visitors this past July. And I would imagine almost every single one saw Emmett perform. Why? Because he's nearly always performing. Emmett is a natural performer, who has developed a number of entertaining and educational set-pieces that he employs when off-stage, which allow him to rest adequately and still interact with the curious.

Our first year, the heat at our early July '07 event was nothing short of punishing. Emmett automatically modified his performances to hold the attention of the listless and inattentive crowds. Did he do fewer performances? Not in the least. Knowing that the people needed to be actively engaged in order to carry away any enjoyment from the event, he redoubled his efforts, making a deep positive impression on both the visitors and the Forest Preserve District staff.

In our second year, the weather was as perfect as one could dare hope for; after a Friday night storm, Saturday was unseasonably cool and comfortable. With the change in weather, Emmett was able to do longer performances to bigger crowds. In the evening, Emmett voluntarily added his own fiery flair to our busy Saturday night celebrations. Fire balloon launches were a popular pastime in the 19th century, but are almost never witnessed by modern living historians. Just for fun, Emmett took it upon himself to treat us to the rare spectacle; the floating light could be seen for miles, hanging in the western sky at twilight. He later showed off some spectacular fire-eating and fire-breathing skills to the delighted cotillion crowd.

Emmett - as the Windy City Wizard - is considered by many on the planning side of the Wauconda event to be a valuable, essential part of the Summer Fair event venue. Long may his contract be renewed!

Sincerely,
Don Jarrett
"Devereaux Jarrett"
Corresponding Secretary
The 1863 Lake County Agricultural & Horticultural Society