

TV star brings 'Chicago on Vacation' adventures to Geneva

Going on vacation was my job” Geoffrey Baer said in Geneva Thursday.

Baer, popular host and senior editor of WTTW’s “Chicago on Vacation with Geoffrey Baer,” hit the road and stopped by GreenFields of Geneva senior living community to talk about his adventures. GreenFields sponsored the event in a series of guest lectures and cultural events to promote lifelong learning.



Baer has explored almost every inch of the Chicago area in TV specials for more than 20 years, profiling 20 of the best vacation destinations within driving distance of Chicago.

He recounted how his series used archival film, old home movies, testimonials, interviews, and footage to showcase tourist towns in Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin and Michigan.

According to Baer, he and his crew packed up a 1973 Chevrolet Caprice station wagon to spend 7,500 miles on the road and 46 nights in hotels to produce the series.

Asked how destinations were chosen for profiles, Baer said general interest is a key selection factor. “Most people aren’t interested in Glen Ellyn’s first settler,” he said. He added that a former Glen Ellyn house of ill repute was a popular destination for Chicagoans.

In response to a question about future projects, Baer said he is planning a “Chicago on the El” series. To gather material, he is researching neighborhood churches and other landmarks while riding Metra trains.

“I’m young at heart,” Baer said. “But rides on roller coasters, waterslides, snowmobiles, and water skis the project has involved has made me realize I’m not so young of body anymore.”

Baer recalled that the project took him back to the former George Williams College Camp in Lake Geneva, Wis., now George Williams College campus of Aurora University. “My family vacationed there every year until I was nine or 10 years old,” he said.

The Chicago resident interspersed his presentation with three-question quizzes featuring facts and fiction about popular destinations

To conclude, he drew raffle-prize winners’ names with help from Nanette Falcone, GreenFields’ move-in coordinator who had introduced him. Drawing prizes were DVDs of Baer shows. After his presentation, he greeted audience members who crowded around with comments and questions.

Call (630) 590-9627 for more information about GreenFields.

PHOTO: WTTW TV personality Geoffrey Baer, right, points out a raffle drawing winner at GreenFields of Geneva senior living community Thursday. Left is Nanette Falcone, facility move-in coordinator. (Al Benson photo)