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CONTACT:

Tim Lawson
502-753-2904
502-553-9145 (cell)
tim@tandemagency.com

Ripley's Believe It or Not!® Brings Baseball Oddities and Wonders of the World to Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory

Ripley's Believe It or Not!® Oddball™ Exhibition Opens March 5, 2016

Louisville, KY – February 1, 2016 – Things are getting a little strange around Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory. In a good way. The museum and Ripley's have teamed up to create a brand new exhibition, *Ripley's Believe It or Not! Oddball*. The *Oddball* exhibit showcases Ripley's bizarre baseball treasures and other unbelievable findings. The show runs March 5, 2016 – January 8, 2017. This is the first time Ripley's has done a special exhibition with a baseball theme, and the extraordinary show is included with the regular price of admission.

"The entertainment factor is off-the-charts with this amazing show," said Anne Jewell, VP and Executive Director of Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory, "Ripley's spin on baseball is full of fun and surprises. We're thrilled to collaborate on this first-of-its-kind exhibition with one of the greatest icons in the world of entertainment."

Mind-Blowing Baseball Wonders

Themes explored in the *Ripley's Believe It or Not! Oddball* exhibit include Robert Ripley's lifelong passion for the sport, quirky baseball oddities, bizarre ballpark food, and team-focused treasures that must be seen to be believed. More than 100 items will be on display, including:

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- **Babe Ruth Game-Worn Uniform**

The *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* baseball uniform worn by Babe Ruth during a charity game in 1939 is like no other uniform in the history of the sport. The team's colorful and exotic outfits look more like Arabian Nights' attire than baseball uniforms. Ruth still managed to hit a home run while wearing the uniform on display. (See attached photo)

- **Giant Yankee Stadium Made From Toothpicks**

Thousands of toothpicks form the jaw-dropping sculpture of the House that Ruth Built. This showstopper greets guests as they enter the phenomenal exhibition, and sets the tone for the entire astounding experience of *Ripley's Believe It or Not! Oddball*.

- **Hank Aaron Sculpture Made from Oh Henry! Candy Bars**

This sensational piece of original pop-art was specially commissioned for the *Oddball* exhibition. Hammerin' Hank and his sweet swing are immortalized in melted chocolate and candy wrappers encased within this playful, interactive work of art.

- **Nuts About Jennifer Lawrence. Crazy for Ketchup & Mustard Tom Cruise**

The Ballpark Food section is anchored by two Hollywood superstars with Louisville connections. More than 10,000 peanuts were used to produce an astonishing portrait of Jennifer Lawrence created specifically for this show, and an amazing "painting" of Tom Cruise made from ketchup and mustard smells like a hot dog at the ballpark.

- **Find Your Favorite Team**

Every major league team is represented with a *Ripley's* twist. A life-sized sculpture of **Johnny Depp as Captain Jack Sparrow** – made from seashells – represents the Pirates. A **portrait of Pete Rose, painted on rose petals**, will delight Cincinnati fans. A heavenly depiction of the **archangel Michael made from 450 pieces of burnt toast** stands-in for the Angels, just to name three.

Ripley's Powerful Baseball Connections

Robert Ripley (1890 – 1949) was a superstar. He enthralled millions with his global adventures. Ripley created Odditoriums to showcase his worldwide findings, and he was a monumental radio, movie and television personality.

His travels, Odditoriums, books, and broadcasts were all inspired by his daily newspaper cartoons which ran in hundreds of newspapers in more than 40 countries during his lifetime. He was the first cartoonist to become a millionaire, and the first inducted into the Cartoon Art Hall of Fame.

As a shy, awkward kid growing up in Santa Rosa, Ca., Ripley had two passions: drawing and baseball. From 1908 – 1912 he played semi-pro ball, and actually went to New York City in 1913 to try out for the New York Giants but broke his arm in spring training. His pro baseball career ended before it ever got started, and as a result, Ripley became a full-time artist.

His injury did not diminish his love for the game. Baseball was a consistent theme throughout Ripley's prolific cartooning career. As part of the war effort, he formed a team in 1939 to raise money for charities. The team was loaded with celebrities and featured two baseball greats: Walter Johnson and Babe Ruth. Ripley himself pitched and played second base.

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The *Oddball* exhibit includes rare, original pen and ink cartoons drawn by Ripley on location around the world between 1931 – 1945. His “on location travel” pieces are regarded as some of the best he ever created. Also featured in the show are five original baseball-themed drawings published between 1929 – 1949. All of these original works of art will be on public display for the first time.

“Ripley was a lot of things: Writer, explorer, movie star, radio personality but first and foremost he was a sports-loving cartoonist,” said Edward Meyer, *Ripley’s* VP of Exhibits and Archives, “His original baseball drawings capture the sense of motion and detailed realism that were the hallmark of his art style.”

Classic Ripley’s Curiosities

The *Oddball* show also includes a number of traditional *Ripley’s Believe It or Not!* crowd-pleasers such as a **two-headed calf**, a **shrunk head** and an **ancient Egyptian mummified foot**. Other specially selected items are a genuine **vampire killing kit**, giant sculptures of **Iron Man and Captain America** made from car parts, and a huge duct tape portrait of **Chewbacca**.

About Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory:

Experience history-in-the-making as you stroll through the factory where world-famous Louisville Slugger bats are created. Award-winning factory tour, newly renovated galleries with interactive exhibits, historic memorabilia, the World’s Biggest Bat, and more. Create a Louisville Slugger bat with your very own name on it, just like the pros. Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory, 800 West Main Street, is open Monday – Saturday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Sundays 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Admission is \$14 for adults, \$13 for seniors (60+), \$8 children (6-12), and free for children 5 and under. For more information, log on to sluggermuseum.com or call 502-588-7228.

About Ripley’s Believe It or Not!:

Ripley’s Believe It or Not! is part of the Ripley Entertainment Inc. (www.ripleys.com) family of worldwide attractions, the global leader in location-based entertainment. More than 13 million people visit its 95-plus attractions in 10 countries each year. In addition to its 32 Believe It or Not! Odditoriums, the Orlando, Florida-based company has publishing, licensing and broadcast divisions that oversee projects including the syndicated Believe It or Not! television show, best-selling books and the popular syndicated cartoon strip, Ripley’s Believe It or Not!, that still runs daily in 42 countries. Ripley Entertainment is a Jim Pattison Company, the third-largest privately held company in Canada.