

**EDUCATION & RESOURCES...THIS SECTION OF OUR WEBSITE IS CHOCK FULL OF INFO**



Just for you, our partners, we have a special section on our website, right there on the [Home Page](#). Look for the button labeled Education & Resources and you'll be surprised at what content is available.

We have info about the upcoming 2010 Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism...details on registration, schedule, and the Silent Auction. We've posted the materials from our Social Media workshops held last fall...great resources for starting your Social Media efforts on Facebook, Twitter and learning about the applications available for you. We have the hand-outs for ALL (or at least most) of the sessions at the ISEN State Convention held last November in Tinley Park. So whether you're planning a gala, street festival, working with volunteers, or any other aspect, the PowerPoint presentations and/or hand-outs can be viewed and downloaded. For those who were unable to attend, click on the website and review the materials. This may not be as helpful as being there, but certainly worth the chance to learn something new.

Also included are the Economic Impact Stats by County for 2008. Look at your county or a neighboring county. And if you are one of our legislative partners, you can pull the specific counties in your district.

As been our practice, we continually research new websites that may be of interest to our regional partners. Here are some sites for websites for you to check out.

**Illinois Tourism:**

[www.enjoyillinois.com](http://www.enjoyillinois.com)

**Northern Illinois Tourism:**

[www.visitnorthernillinois.com](http://www.visitnorthernillinois.com)

**Are you ready for The New Reality ...**

The tourism industry is a thriving source of Illinois' economy and annually, professionals in this industry come together to learn from tourism experts and take advantage of the latest information, products and services which enhance travel in Illinois. With that said, join us for the **2010 Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism on February 17-19 at The Fairmont Chicago.**



When looking at our changing industry, we feel we've been given a wonderful opportunity to discover new ways to present ourselves. Now, more than ever, it is important to look beyond traditional marketing efforts, embrace change and take charge of the current environment to maximize results for your destinations. We need to shift our focus from telling consumers where to travel to listening to their travel desires and get the right message out about Illinois because this is, **The New Reality.**

In this **New Reality** we need to embrace word-of-mouth recommendations which are influential to travelers and gain the trust of those who are leading the conversations, both on and off line. To guide this thinking, this year's Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism will provide an understanding of where we stand as an industry and how we can successfully move ahead so that Illinois continues to be a leading travel destination.

Industry experts will share their knowledge of evolving travel trends and enjoyable social events will make for great networking opportunities. Join the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism and the Illinois Council of Convention and Visitors Bureaus to learn how to effectively engage consumers and keep them traveling throughout Illinois. The conference begins Wednesday, February 17 with a series of presentations and the annual Ice Breaker reception. We continue with the annual State of the State of Tourism Address, many valuable sessions and an outstanding lineup of keynote speakers including Roger Dow, President & CEO, U.S. Travel Association, Futurist Jim Carroll, and Motivational Speaker Mike Rayburn. The conference will conclude with the Illinois Excellence in Tourism awards luncheon Friday, February 19.

**Registration**

To register complete the registration form found online at [www.ilgovconference.com](http://www.ilgovconference.com). If you wish to mail or fax your registration, please use the PDF Registration Forms which then can be faxed to (217) 442-2137 or mailed to: Illinois Council of Convention & Visitors Bureau, 100 W. Main Street, Suite 146, Danville, IL 61832. AND if you register prior to **Friday, January 8th you'll save \$50**, your fees are \$335. After that the fees increase to \$385, so be sure to take advantage of the savings. And if three or more are coming from your organization there are discounts available.

**Hotel Accommodations**

The conference takes place at The Fairmont Chicago, 200 North Columbus Drive, Chicago, IL 60601. For Governor's Conference attendees **rooms are available at a rate of \$139** (per single room, per

**Chicago Tourism:**  
[www.explorechicago.org](http://www.explorechicago.org)

**Lincoln Bicentennial:**  
[www.lincoln200.net](http://www.lincoln200.net)

**Travel Industry of America:**  
[www.tia.org](http://www.tia.org)

**Illinois Council of Convention & Visitors Bureaus:**  
[www.iccvb.org](http://www.iccvb.org)

**Illinois Wine Industry:**  
[www.illinoiswine.com](http://www.illinoiswine.com)

**Northern Illinois Wine Trail:**  
[www.northernillinoiswinetrail.com](http://www.northernillinoiswinetrail.com)

**National Scenic Byways:**  
[www.byways.org](http://www.byways.org)

**Illinois Byways:**  
[www.illinoisbyways.org](http://www.illinoisbyways.org)

**Illinois Agri-Tourism (ATPI):**  
[www.agfun.com](http://www.agfun.com)

**Traveling Green:**  
[www.travelgreen.org](http://www.travelgreen.org)

**Illinois Film Locations:**  
[www.onscreenillinois.com](http://www.onscreenillinois.com)

**Lincoln Bicentennial Commission:**  
[www.alpm.org](http://www.alpm.org)

**US Travel Association:**  
[www.ustravel.org](http://www.ustravel.org)

**Power of Travel – info & stats:**  
[www.poweroftravel.org](http://www.poweroftravel.org)

**Discover America:**  
[www.discoveramerica.com](http://www.discoveramerica.com)

**Tour Illinois:**  
[www.tourismillinois.org](http://www.tourismillinois.org)

**Meet In Illinois:**  
[www.meetinillinois.com](http://www.meetinillinois.com)

**Sports Illinois:**  
[www.sportsillinois.com](http://www.sportsillinois.com)

**Illinois African-American Travel:**  
[www.soulfulillinois.com](http://www.soulfulillinois.com)

**Illinois Hispanic Travel:**  
[www.disfrutailillinois.com](http://www.disfrutailillinois.com)

**University of Illinois Extension Agritourism:**  
[web.extension.uiuc.edu/agritourism/](http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/agritourism/)

**Small Farms Conference**  
[conferences.uiuc.edu/smallfarms](http://conferences.uiuc.edu/smallfarms)

**Illinois Association of Museums Conference**  
[ChildrensDiscoveryMuseum.net/IAM](http://ChildrensDiscoveryMuseum.net/IAM)

**The Special Event Show, 2010 New Orleans**  
[www.thespecialeventshow.com](http://www.thespecialeventshow.com)

**SIGN UP FOR CO-OP MAILINGS**  
 Remember to contact Diane at Illinois Lincoln Highway, 815-547-3854, to participate in the Co-Op Mailing Program. Leads will be coming in from the Fall-Winter Insert. In the mailings, we showcase several communities, the ILHC

night, plus tax). Hotel reservations can be made online at [www.ilgovconference.com](http://www.ilgovconference.com). For phone reservations, please call (312) 565-8000 or (800) 526-2008 and tell the operator that the event is the 2010 Illinois Governor's Conference. The group reservation code to receive this special rate is ILGC.

**A GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE TRADITION...THE SILENT AUCTION YOU CAN HELP!**

The Silent Auction is always a much anticipated event during the Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism. At the 2010 Conference, attendees won't be disappointed! The Silent Auction will feature amazing travel packages, tickets to sporting venues, incredible restaurants and shows, and beautiful items for the home. The Silent Auction is a fun, and sometimes spirited competition to see who can "win" the best item at the best price. And best of all, it showcases our wonderful state's beauty and recreational opportunities.

BUT, to make this a success we NEED YOUR HELP. We need the donations in order to create the baskets and fabulous prizes we offer. This year, the Silent Auction committee wishes to emphasize travel and tourism as that is what our industry is about. Specifically, they are asking for getaway packages to encourage your industry peers to visit your area and use their vacation time in 2010 to stay in Illinois! The CVBs and RTDOs have been asked to collect donations of overnight stays with attraction tickets and dining certificate and create Getaway Packages for the conference. We ask that in addition to the certificates, you collect brochures of the items in your package so people bidding on them know what they are. You may also donate baskets or items of value and of interest. A portion of the proceeds from the silent auction will go towards scholarships to allow students to attend the conference. To submit your packages, simply fill out the Donation Form found on our website ([www.visitnorthernillinois.com](http://www.visitnorthernillinois.com)) under the Button for Education & Resources. Complete and fax it to (309) 833-4754 attn: Roger Carmack. The deadline for submissions is January 15, 2010. You'll be able to mail in donations of certificates and tickets, but requested to bring baskets to the conference.



**FACEBOOK AND TWITTER...ALL THE RAGE**  
**OK – we have totally embraced Social Media, and we know that visitors are using this new form of communication too.**

Yes, we've hosted sessions on Facebook, Twitter and the tools-applications to make this an easier and manageable marketing tool for your organization. And, this was also a timely topic at the Fall ICCVB meeting and will be addressed at the upcoming Governor's Conference. So, I ask you – has your business, organization, festival or event taken the BIG STEP, are you engaged in Social Media?

NITDO has been actively working with Facebook and Twitter for several months, and has gathered a large number of fans and followers. And, we have done, as most others have, provided a means to become a FAN or a FOLLOWER on the home page of our website. BUT, we have also added in a New Feature. On the Home Page at [www.visitnorthernillinois.com](http://www.visitnorthernillinois.com) we have a button labeled SOCIAL MEDIA. Here we want to feature links to our regional partners who are engaging in both Facebook and Twitter. We'll be listing our partners in alphabetical order, and showcasing the organization's page using their avatar as well

2009 Visitor Guide, Illinois Scenic Byways rack cards, Northern Illinois Wine Trail rack card, and the Northern Illinois Visitor Guide. If your community would like to take part in these co-op mailings, please send 3,000 of your brochures or rack cards along with a check made payable to ILHC in the amount of \$475 to cover the cost of bulk mailing. Great deal at less than \$.16 each!

## NITDO BOOSTING IMAGE LIBRARY



We need help and input from our tourism partners! We have been working hard at building our image library and we are always on the lookout for new shots of all that happens in our area. We are always looking for images from

ALL seasons and ALL types of events. People shots are awesome to have on hand! You can assist by sending us your images (with proper photo credits) to [mary@visitsouthernillinois.com](mailto:mary@visitsouthernillinois.com).

## Calendar of Events - Illinois Tourism Happenings . . .

### Jan 1, 2010

HOLIDAY – Office Closed (New Year's Day)

### Jan 6-8

Illinois Specialty Growers Conference, Springfield

### Jan 7

ATPI Annual Meeting, Springfield

### Jan 11-16

The Special Event Show, New Orleans

### Jan 18

HOLIDAY – Office Closed (Martin L. King Day)

### Jan 19

Illinois Lincoln Highway Coalition Board Mtg, DeKalb

### February 12

HOLIDAY – Office Closed (Lincoln's Birthday)

### February 15

HOLIDAY – Office Closed (President's Day)

### Feb 17-19

2010 Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism, Chicago

### March 17

Northern IL Festival & Special Event Workshop, Rockford

### May 15-19

International PowWow, Orlando

as address with live links. We'll be unveiling this new website addition in the upcoming weeks, and will be soliciting your pages to make sure we have the correct info.

We have also encouraged and are working with our Scenic Byway Partner, Illinois Lincoln Highway to join in the mix. And while at the workshop late last month, when everyone else was joining in, we did it again to promote the Northern Illinois Wine Trail. Now here is where we can use your assistance...to get more fans and to provide news to share...To find the Northern Illinois Tourism, we have adopted a slight variation of our name: we are VisitNorthernIL. On Facebook you can find us at [www.facebook.com/VisitNorthernIL](http://www.facebook.com/VisitNorthernIL) and on Twitter the same applies, [www.twitter.com/VisitNorthernIL](http://www.twitter.com/VisitNorthernIL). For the Illinois Lincoln Highway, we worked off their website, which is [www.drivelincolnhighway.com](http://www.drivelincolnhighway.com), therefore to find their pages search for [www.facebook.com/DriveLincolnHwy](http://www.facebook.com/DriveLincolnHwy) or @DriveLincolnHwy. Our newest endeavor, with the smallest reach to date is for the Northern Illinois Wine Trail. You can find posts about the wine trail [www.facebook.com/NorthernILWine](http://www.facebook.com/NorthernILWine) and on Twitter @NorthernILWine.

And we'd certainly appreciate that you would share our request to become our FANS or FOLLOWERS on your Facebook and Twitter posts too – the more we promote each other, the more people we can attraction to our region.

So, now that you know how to find us and become a FAN or FOLLOWER, send us your news. We are always looking for things that have a regional appeal. Whether it be a special event taking place or a workshop (such as the TSE or Illinois Governor's Conference), or even the new opening store or attraction, please send us your news to share.

## SIGN, SIGN, EVERYWHERE A SIGN – PERHAPS NOT EVERYWHERE!



Hey, have you seen the new large, blue signs along the Interstates in Illinois, the ones that features ATTRACTIONS? IBOT has been working with IDOT to implement the Tourism Attraction Signage Program for interstate highways throughout Illinois. These large blue signs will be much like those currently found along the interstates for Gas, Food, Lodging and Camping. Due to the cost of implementing these signs statewide, we will phase in the program over the next several years. When completed, these signs will provide all of us a powerful new way to promote attractions throughout our state.

The revised the policy and application can be found on the IBOT website [www.enjoyillinois.com](http://www.enjoyillinois.com) under the button at bottom of home page, labeled Travel Professionals. Each sign can accommodate 6 tourism attraction logos and each attraction MUST identify ONE intersection for the sign. The intersection closest to the attraction must also be identified through a computer mapping system, for example, Map Quest or Rand McNally, to verify the directions and the Exit Number. Attractions will not be allowed to request logos at more than one intersection therefore it is important for attractions to use the intersection closest to their facility. There is a nominal fee for this program, and participating attractions will be charged a yearly fee for the signs in the same manner as IDOT's Business Logo Signing Program to cover their costs.

## IT'S HERE...THE 2010 NORTHERN ILLINOIS VISITOR GUIDE

Yes, we're pleased to announce that the new 2010 Northern Illinois Visitor Guide is here. We are also grateful to our partnership with Trittenhaus Design who produced this wonderful publication for our visitors. And, a big thanks to the advertisers for their financial support and our regional CVBs and other partners who supply materials for inclusion. It's a tremendous undertaking, and we're pleased with the outcome. We know that the 50,000 guides produced will be used in our advertising fulfillment program (coordinated with our scenic byway partner, Illinois Lincoln Highway Coalition), in the kiosks at the Illinois Tollway Oases, and at regional partners' visitor centers and attractions. The day the guides were delivered we shipped out over 75 cases...and in case you didn't get your order in before our initial shipment, we'd be happy to get you a case or two. Contact Mary Peterson at our office (815 547-3740) or email her at [mary@visitnorthernillinois.com](mailto:mary@visitnorthernillinois.com) to request shipping. AND, at the same time we took delivery of our 50,000 regional guides, the Illinois Lincoln Highway Coalition received their 50,000 guides, the 2010 Lincoln Highway Visitor Guides. Yes, we coordinated the inside delivery of both guides to save money. Copies of the Lincoln Highway Guide are available. If you would like a case of those, you can contact Sue Hronik at the ILHC offices (815) 547-3854 or email her at [sue@drivelincolnhighway.com](mailto:sue@drivelincolnhighway.com).

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## ILLINOIS TOURISM INFORMATION CENTER BROCHURE NEW POLICY

Hey, big news – we all love our printed materials (visitor guides, festivals and events, museums, byways, etc.) to be displayed at the State's Tourist Information Centers throughout Illinois. And you should be aware there are NEW GUIDELINES that are effective immediately as presented at the October ICCVB meeting for stakeholders. We have put these materials online on our website under the button for Education & Resources. Please be sure and pass this information on to the appropriate staff person that handles your brochure placement to ensure your brochures and tourist information meet the proper requirements.

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So what does this mean to YOU? You, as our partner, are being asked to review this program, check to see that interstates in your area may qualify for the program – AND then secure possible partner businesses that would benefit from the exposure. So, check out the guidelines, and let's get moving. Visitors are looking for new places and things to experience, let's showcase a few more in Northern Illinois.

## US TRAVEL INDUSTRY TO ADD 90,000 AMERICAN JOBS IN 2010 AND OTHER POSITIVE NEWS

The US Travel Association today announced that projected modest 2010 increases in leisure, business and international inbound travel will enable the industry to add nearly 90,000 American jobs. Leisure travel is expected to rise 2.0%, business travel is projected to increase by 2.5% and international inbound travel will increase by 3.0%. These job gains come on the heels of 400,000 combined travel industry job losses in 2008 and 2009.

"The travel industry shares President Obama's goal of putting Americans back to work. Our industry is uniquely capable of adapting to economic upswings and quickly adding tens of thousands of jobs," said Roger Dow, President and CEO of the US Travel Association. "What we announce today is based upon modest increases in travel. Given its immense potential, we call on the Administration and Members of Congress to build a plan for economic recovery that drives significant increases in travel."

A federal economic recovery plan to significantly increase travel and create jobs would include:

- Passage of the Travel Promotion Act to encourage millions of travelers to visit the United States
- Improvements in the visa and entry processes that have largely driven the decline in overseas travel to the United States post-9/11
- Funding for a "NextGen" air traffic control system that will limit flight delays, cancellations and negative impact on the environment
- Encouragement of meetings, events and incentive programs through tax deductions and other mechanisms
- The travel industry employs 7.7 million Americans, supporting one out of every eight non-farm jobs in the United States

**Domestic Travel Overview:** Domestic leisure travel is expected to increase 2.0% in 2010, with a corresponding increase in leisure travel spending of nearly 5 percent. Domestic business travel volume will grow 2.5% next year and business travel spending will increase 4 percent.

"Projected growth in leisure travel is an indicator of rising consumer confidence and disposable income," said Dr. Suzanne Cook, senior vice president of research for the US Travel Association. "Following a difficult 2009, businesses have a heightened focus on the value and bottom-line benefits of travel. We expect to see a slight increase in business travel next year based in part on pent-up demand for face-to-face meetings that drive growth and productivity."

**International Inbound Travel:** International inbound travel will increase nearly 3.0% in 2010; however, growth in overseas travel (excluding Canada and Mexico) will remain stable at about 1.0%. Overseas travel visitation in 2010 will remain below 2000 levels (23.5 million versus 26.0 million, respectively). The concern about the lack of substantial growth next year from this market is that overseas travelers contribute significantly more to the U.S. economy, spending an average of \$4,500 per person, per trip compared to about \$900 per person, per trip for Canadian and Mexican travelers.

**NEW U.S. TRAVEL WEBSITE IMPROVES USER EXPERIENCE**



The US Travel Association has a new website which provides a greatly improved platform to better communicate with members, industry

watchers and other users of [www.ustravel.org](http://www.ustravel.org). Its presence rounds out the U.S. Travel brand created when the Travel Industry Association and the Travel Business Roundtable joined forces at the start of 2009. Content is organized within seven easy-to-use categories.

Enhancements include an information-rich home page with top-line travel industry news, the use of rich media, and self-service features that permit members to provide updates, transact business and interact with one another through online forums.



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Belvidere, Illinois 61008  
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**Website: [www.visitnorthernillinois.com](http://www.visitnorthernillinois.com)**

**Also find us on:**



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**FY10 CO-OP MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES - ONE CHANCE LEFT!**

Last Call! Last Chance! NITDO has requested one full page Summer 2010 Getaway Guide (newspaper insert). You can reserve the upcoming publication OR place your reservation for any and all of the options we are offering in our co-op program. Rates below indicate the cost of the space, your cost as the IBOT grant was awarded at a 50-50 level. The format will be repeated from the current year where pages will be divided into 1/6th units; Each partner will receive a one photo or logo, headline, 65 words of copy, name of organization, address, website and phone. Space in the first two opportunities sold out, but we have a few spaces remaining in the Summer 2010 insert – **Deadline: February 4th.** Cost for the publication is as follows:

	<u>Full Cost 1/6th Page</u>	<u>1/6th page w/50-50 Grant</u>
Summer 2010	\$4,023.66	\$2,011.92

So, make your decisions and let our office know. We have only six (6) spaces available for each publication, so it is truly **FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED.**

**IT'S BACK...THE NORTHERN ILLINOIS FESTIVAL & SPECIAL EVENT WORKSHOP RETURNS IN 2010**

Whether it's just plain luck, or the Luck of the Irish, we've been able to work with the Illinois Special Event Network (ISEN) to once again offer the Northern Illinois Festival & Special Event Workshop. Date has been set on an especially lucky day, March 17, 2010 and the location, the Clock Tower Resort in Rockford (and home to the newly opened Tilted Kilt Restaurant). How lucky!



The details are still being worked out, but we know the date and location. We'll be offering an extended half-day session; beginning with a keynote presentation over breakfast. Day will begin at 8:00 a.m. with registration and breakfast and conclude after the luncheon keynote at 2:00 p.m. We'll offer two break-out sessions in the mid-morning with two options for each session. And the day concludes with a hands-on keynote following lunch. We won't be offering the Entertainment Showcase or the Vendor Expo, as their returning event will be smaller in scope. BUT, all attendees will be provided with a Resources Bag filled with coupons and promotional materials from area vendors anxious to work with your event. And if you know of a Vendor who may want to share materials and information, have them contact our office to have a form sent out.

The schedule is still being finalized, but we are reviewing the surveys from the last two workshops held in our region. We'll look at current trends, topics presented at either IFEA or ISEN's convention, as well as speaker availability. And, after that, well put together a strong overview of the workshop.

So, mark your calendars for March 17th. It's your Lucky Day, and we're hoping you want to spend some time with us getting ideas for your 2010 events.....And, the cost for your workshop, including breakfast and lunch, materials will be \$50....what a lucky deal.

