

BE SURE TO VISIT OUR EDUCATION & RESOURCES SECTION



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've posted the materials from our Social Media workshops with 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. 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

Northern Illinois Tourism:

www.visitnorthernillinois.com

Chicago Tourism:

www.explorechicago.org

Lincoln Bicentennial:

www.lincoln200.net

Travel Industry of America:

www.tia.org

Illinois Council of Convention & Visitors Bureaus:

www.iccvb.org

Illinois Wine Industry:

www.illinoiswine.com

MEANINGFUL MILES...NEW ASPECT OF TRAVELING THROUGH ILLINOIS

Many of you heard about "**Meaningful Miles**," the State's new good purpose initiative announced during the 2010 Governor's Conference on Tourism. Partners were thrilled to launch this program and have received some excellent feedback from the breakout session. For those who were unable to attend, here is some background:

The goal of this initiative is to provide Illinois travelers a way to "give back" and align their Illinois travel with a greater social purpose. The **Illinois Meaningful Miles** program will aggregate all of the Illinois travel opportunities that plan to give back to the community – the local restaurant that donates to a food bank, the theme park that offers free admission in exchange for a day of volunteer service, etc. Collectively, these opportunities will help Illinois stand out from other states. In the near future we will ask you to submit your **Meaningful Miles** which we will filter into a user-friendly micro site on www.EnjoyIllinois.com. Here, travelers will be able to search and download PDFs explaining your offering.

We hope you are as excited as the attendees at the Governor's Conference about the Meaningful Miles initiative, and we are strongly encouraging you to participate. There was a conference call last week outlining the program, and we've placed the PDF of the materials on our website, www.visitnorthernillinois.com under the button for Education & Resources. Meaningful Miles will be an amazing opportunity for visitors, begin to learn more so you can participate too.

PRESENTATION MATERIALS – GREAT RESOURCES TO CHECK OUT!



WOW, we are fortunate that in Illinois so many opportunities are available to learn from experts and colleagues. During **Wine Lover's Weekend I** was invited to a session offered by VisitGalena.org to hear Peter Yesawich, Chairman and Chief

Executive Officer of Ypartnership, America's leading marketing, advertising and public relations agency serving travel, leisure and lifestyle clients. It was an amazing conversation with so many key and relevant topics shared. One of the things I need to share is YOU can access info from Yesawich...and its FREE, it's a monthly newsletter called the **Forum Market Intelligence**. Another point, Check out the site www.yaycation.com to help you plan how to save for your getaway! How many lattes are you willing to sacrifice for you vacation? was a link on how to save for travel...by reducing the lattes and foo-foo coffees that I love (big sigh, that was tough to hear), but check out this link <http://www.travelmuse.com/yaycations/budget.htm>.

I participated in a session on downtown developments in Monticello, talking with individuals and organizations working together for new "life" and experiences in downtown corridors throughout the State. The Illinois Main Street program is alive in Illinois....just how many Main Streets are in your area? Being a Main Street is like a "Good Housekeeping Seal", we're proud to have so many Main Streets in Northern Illinois.

Northern Illinois Wine Trail:

www.northernillinoiswinetrail.com

National Scenic Byways:

www.byways.org

Illinois Byways:

www.illinoisbyways.org

Illinois Agri-Tourism (ATPI):

www.agfun.com

Traveling Green:

www.travelgreen.org

Illinois Film Locations:

www.onscreenillinois.com

Lincoln Bicentennial Commission:

www.alplm.org

US Travel Association:

www.ustravel.org

Power of Travel – info & stats:

www.poweroftravel.org

Discover America:

www.discoveramerica.com

Tour Illinois:

www.tourismillinois.org

Meet In Illinois:

www.meetinillinois.com

Sports Illinois:

www.sportsillinois.com

Illinois African-American Travel:

www.soulfulillinois.com

Illinois Hispanic Travel:

www.disfrutailinois.com

**University of Illinois Extension
Agritourism:**

web.extension.uiuc.edu/agritourism/

Small Farms Conference

conferences.uiuc.edu/smallfarms

**Illinois Association of Museums
Conference**

ChildrensDiscoveryMuseum.net/IAM

NITDO BOOSTING IMAGE LIBRARY



Help is needed 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](#).

Did you attend the 2010 Governor’s Conference? With amazing speakers and panels that included US Travel Association president Roger Dow’s update on the state of national tourism and the Travel Promotion Act (now signed into law) and Mike Rayburn’s humorous and motivational guitar demonstrations, the conference was a much-talked-about success. At this year’s event, the “New Reality” featured the greening of the Conference, live-blogging and tweeting, and an all-around great showcase for our industry. And, many of the presentations are now available on-line to be reviewed, shared and downloaded (not the same as being there in person, but very helpful nonetheless). Check out <http://www.ilgovconference.com/ilgovsite> to review the materials.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS WINE TRAIL NEWS

Here is some great news about the wineries in Northern Illinois. First, the March 2010 **Wine Lover’s Weekend** was phenomenal; fantastic people, food and wine. The Grand Tasting was SOLD OUT, 750 tickets gone before you knew it, and the wine dinner at Fried Green Tomatoes was truly amazing. This “not to miss event” is now planned for March 25-27, 2011 (mark your calendar right now!) and promises to be even bigger than this year! The big news was that Galena Cellars will be extending their Nouveau Celebration combining with the best aspects of Wine Lovers’ Weekend (hint it’s a second Great Tasting on Saturday). So, mark your calendars and join me on November 19-21, a wonderful celebration right before Thanksgiving. And, we’d be remiss not to add in a plug for a new wine festival...the **Top of Illinois Wine Festival** is set for June 19, 2010 in downtown Galena.

And wine lovers...here is some "news" to share with your friends. We have 91 wineries in Illinois that collectively produced over 357,000 gallons of wine in 2009, with a retail value of \$27.1 million. And wineries welcomed over 200,000 annual visitors last year. Have you made your plans to check them out? We'd recommend starting with the two dozen plus on the [Northern Illinois Wine Trail](#) - just a hint!



SIGN UP FOR CO-OP MAILINGS

Remember to contact [Sue](#) at Illinois Lincoln Highway, 815-547-3854, to participate in the Co-Op Mailing Program. Leads will be coming in from the Spring Insert. In the mailings, we showcase several communities, the ILHC 2010 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 (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), be sure to contact Sue for details. Great deal at less than \$.16 each!

FIND US AND OUR PARTNERS ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

NITDO has added in a New Feature. On the [Home Page](#) 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 as address with live links. Don't miss out! You will also find our icons to click on to find VisitNorthernIL on Facebook, Twitter and Flickr!



Also...at the 2010 Governor's Conference, there was the unveiling of a GREAT video on the Importance of Tourism to the Economic Impact of Illinois...It was well-received, and has been delivered to all CVBs and TDOs to share at meetings and presentations (we've been showing it everywhere!) For those who want a sneak-peak...or a chance to review, look at the video online via You Tube. Here is the link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kbo0Yi67BQQ&feature=sub>



We have also encouraged and are working with our Scenic Byway Partner, Illinois Lincoln Highway to join in the mix and 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, also find the Northern Illinois



Tourism, on Facebook at [facebook.com/VisitNorthernIL](https://www.facebook.com/VisitNorthernIL) and on Twitter @VisitNorthernIL. For the Illinois Lincoln Highway, find their pages at [facebook.com/DriveLincolnHwy](https://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 [facebook.com/NorthernILWine](https://www.facebook.com/NorthernILWine) and on Twitter @NorthernILWine.

Calendar of Events - Illinois Tourism Happenings . . .

April 14

ATPI Board Meeting-Conference Call

April 20

IL Lincoln Highway Coalition Mtg, DeKalb

April 20

Historic Tax Credit Workshops, Sycamore

April 21

Historic Tax Credit Workshop, Marengo

April 29

ICCVB Lobby Day, Springfield

May 5-7

ICCVB Meeting, St. Charles

May 8-16

National Tourism Week

May 15-19

International PowWow, Orlando

June 22

ILHC Annual Meeting

June 22-26

Lincoln Highway Assn Convention, Dixon

CONTACT US FOR TOURISM MATERIALS

Yes, we're pleased to announce that the new publications are in house and our small loading dock is over-flowing. First, we have received a quantity of the 2010 Illinois Travel Guide, designed in a new format with new page formats. If you haven't seen it, check out the website, www.enjoyillinois.com to download or request your copy.

ENCOURAGE JOBS IN ILLINOIS BY SUPPORTING A REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT!

The Illinois legislature is currently considering a Senate Bill (SB 2559) based on the highly successful Missouri tax credit enacted in 1997, which has generated nearly 40,000 jobs for Missourians. The Illinois tax credit would allow a credit on Illinois state income taxes equal to 25% of the cost of a qualified historic rehabilitation, and it can be used in conjunction with the 20% federal tax credit to provide an important boost to many small scale rehab projects that would not be possible otherwise. Numerous studies have shown that Rehabilitation Tax Credits are one of the most effective ways to do this:

- Create New Jobs - The incredibly effective Missouri tax credit results in 8,060 in-state jobs each year--including 3,590 jobs in construction, 1,291 service jobs, and 1,062 retail jobs--for each \$346 million spent annually on the rehabilitation of historic buildings (Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation, 2002).
- Increase Demand for Local Labor - Because it is labor intensive, rehab of historic buildings creates more jobs than new construction. Only half of the investment in new construction goes toward materials, while 60-70% of the investment in rehab projects goes toward labor (Rypkema, 2009).
- Attract New Investment to Illinois - Tax credits are a very effective way to attract significant private and federal dollars for local rehab projects. Between 1997 and 2006, nearly \$952 million in private investment was leveraged by the state tax credit program in Virginia (Virginia, 2007), while a 2009 study showed that \$342 million in state tax credits in Maryland has leveraged over \$1.5 billion in rehabilitation expenditures -- a threefold return on the state's investment! (The Abell Foundation, 2009).
- Stimulate Economic Development - For every \$1 million spent on historic rehabilitation, local income increases by \$704,000 and 20.2 jobs are created. Those results significantly exceed payback from other types of state investment. For instance, \$1 million of manufacturing output adds an average of only \$470,000 to local household incomes and creates only 13.9 jobs (Rypkema, 2008).
- Produce Good Public Policies - Rehabilitation of historic buildings starts to pay back the state's investment immediately through taxes on construction jobs and materials. But the tax credits are not released by the state until the rehab work is complete, which means that 1/3 to 1/2 of the state's investment is returned before the building is even put back in service.

To learn more about the Historic Tax Credit Legislation, SB 2559
The Illinois DCEO, through a contract with our office, has been working

And, of course we think our Northern Illinois Visitor Guide is exceptional as another great piece for visitors to utilize when planning their trip to our region.



We can either ship a case to you, or deliver in person if we're heading in your direction. Contact Mary at the office or email her if you need some. You can also download our guide directly. AND, we'd be remiss if we didn't tell you that the new 2010 Illinois Lincoln Highway Guide is available as well. You can get copies of this publication by contacting us to request a quantity.

with Peoples Economic Development Corporation to promote the rehabilitation and promotion of Illinois' magnificent historical infrastructure. Through this program several communities throughout the State of Illinois have taken a renewed look at how their downtowns can become a draw for both retail development and tourism. Even though there is no single funding source that can be used to support the rehabilitation of these historic structures, there are several programs that can be used by local governments, economic development agencies, and individual building owners to assist in planning, marketing and rehabilitation.



Peoples
Economic Development Corporation

As a part of the commitment to the NITDO and the grant requirements, we are conducting a series of workshops to help educate local officials and building owners in these opportunities. The goal is to educate economic and community development leaders, tourism and downtown development coordinators, as well as historic preservation specialist in each of the RTDO Regions. This is an opportunity to learn first-hand the importance of preservation as an end game toward sustainability and economic growth in our communities.

NEWS FROM ABRAHAM LINCOLN



PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM

The Museum is striving to reach 10,000 FANS on Facebook and

10,000 Followers on Twitter before April 18th. Why sign-up? You get to be the first to hear about upcoming events, specials and news (yes Lincoln still has news). And, everyone who signs up gets to be entered into a drawing for a GREAT prize, a rarely offered tour of the vault where some of the world's top original Lincoln treasures are stored, as well as a behind-the-scenes tour of the most visited museum in the country, and an overnight stay at the Hilton Springfield for a perfect getaway. The winners will be announced on April 19, 2010 (that is the fifth anniversary of the opening of this great attraction). Details can be found online at www.presidentlincoln.org.

Workshops for the Northern Illinois region have been set for **Tuesday, April 20th in the afternoon (1:00 – 5:00 p.m.) set in Sycamore** at the American National Bank of DeKalb County (1985 DeKalb Avenue). Our second session takes place the following morning **9:00 a.m. - Noon, Wednesday, April 21st in Marengo** at the Harris Bank Building (100 West Washington Street, 2nd floor). You can make reservations for either session by calling our office (815) 547-3740. The complete workshop brochure is available on our website, www.visitnorthernillinois.com under the heading for Education & Resources.

So, put April 20-21 on your calendars and learn more about the proposed new program...and if we cross our fingers, the news may not be about the "proposed" program is may focus on the "new legislation". To make a reservation contact the NITDO office, space is limited.

REGIONAL TRAINING....WE'RE TALKING ABOUT YOU!

On St. Patrick's Day we visited the call center staff in Taylorville, the people who get to answer all of the questions people ask by calling 800-2CONNECT (the Illinois Office of Tourism's toll-free phone). In two hour-long sessions we were able to showcase the entire Northern Illinois area. Thanks to all of you, we created an extensive 3-ring binder that contained the latest and most up-to-date print materials, as well as your suggested top 5 Attractions and Top 5 Events, these gave me hints on things to share in the presentation. Thanks for letting me talk about you, and the wonderful things we have to see and do here in Northern Illinois. Also, we were able to create gift bags containing treats and presents that go a long way to keep attention. Thanks to the **Rockford Area CVB, Galena's Wild Cover Day Spa, On The Waterfront festival, Belvidere Mural Mile, and Galena Cellars Winery**...and the delicious cookies & cupcakes in themed-colors by **Buchanan Street Pie Company**. Your efforts were greatly appreciated to make this presentation fun, enjoyable and engaging for all of us!



INTERPRETIVE MURAL PROJECT IS MOVING ALONG

The Illinois Lincoln Highway is cranking this along. In the past few weeks,



200 South State Street
Belvidere, Illinois 61008
Phone: 815.547.3740
Fax: 815.547.3749

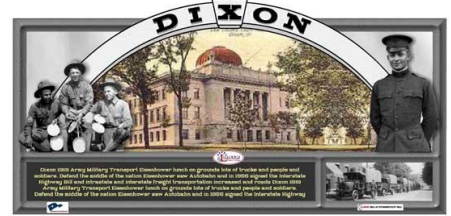
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murals (and great coverage ensued) for murals installed in Genoa, Cortland and Oregon. Dixon is painted...will be up in early April. And the renderings that have been shared for other communities are amazing. The stories and communities underway will be amazing...and the goal is to have as many done as possible when Dixon is the host city for the 2010 Lincoln Highway Association convention this June. A hint of things to come: Fulton talks about their bridge over the Mississippi River; University Park is all about the Van Buren sisters; Byron focuses on the timed auto racing along the famed roadway; North Aurora is describing their Exposition Park, quite the attraction of the day along the Fox River...that's enough for now, but WOW! Big thanks to the community supporters, the vendor, Shawcraft Signs, and their talented artists, and the ILHC staff as they are creating large-scale public art throughout Northern Illinois. What a legacy for all.



To see the ILHC will get the 40 murals completed; you just need to check out the website (www.drivelincolnhighway.com) for updates on the progress. They are truly amazing! If your community is an ILHC-certified community, and has not taken advantage of ILHC's offer to install a 10' x 20' mural

depicting the highway's history, now's the time to put a bug in the ear of your mayor or village president. Have them contact ILHC by emailing [Sue Hronik](mailto:SueHronik) and they'll make sure to get the info out. Most communities have been contacted and are taking the steps to procure one of these beautiful murals.

 **ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.**