



## ASSOCIATION OF MIDWEST MUSEUMS PRESENTS TWO WORKSHOPS

After presenting an extremely successful workshop (*The Visitor's Virtual Voice*) in Chicago, the Association of Midwest Museums (AMM) has planned two special workshops in Beloit, Wisconsin.

Both workshops are scheduled for Friday, July 10 at Beloit College. The workshops should be relevant to all sizes and types of museums with the added advantage of both being in the same location so that staff members with different responsibilities can travel together to lower travel costs.

The first workshop, **Step by Step: Building Your Museum's Membership Program**, will be held at the Wright Museum of Art at Beloit College. The workshop will be led by Jeff Reiter and Lori Arguello. Registration for the day-long workshop is \$40 for AMM members and \$60 for non-members.

The second workshop, **Simple Methods for Identifying Materials Used in Museum Objects**, will be held at the Logan Museum of Anthropology at Beloit College. Fees for the day-long workshop are \$50 for AMM or MRC members and \$75 for non-members.

To register, download and complete the [registration form](#).

### CO-OP MAILINGS ... WE NEED YOUR MATERIALS

We have coordinated a regional fulfillment mailing for partners showcasing the various things to see and do along the Illinois Lincoln Highway Corridor. We use the leads from Madden Preprint's Illinois Fall-Winter Guide (released over Labor Day weekend) as well as ads placed in the 2009 Illinois Travel Guide and the Spring and Summer 2009

## ILLINOIS IBOT RELEASES 2008 TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT NUMBERS FOR ILLINOIS

Officials from the Illinois Bureau of Tourism/ (IBOT)/Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO) announced Illinois tourism in 2008 generated billions of dollars for local economies and supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs across the state.

The economic impact of tourism increased by more than \$883 million in 2008 to a record setting \$30.8 billion, with visitors spending nearly \$84 million in Illinois businesses every day in 2008, according to the U.S. Travel Association.

Domestic travel expenditures increased to \$28.4 billion, a 1.7% increase from 2007. International travel expenditures increased to \$2.4 billion, a 21% increase over 2007 and retail shopping by international visitors increased dramatically by more than 29%.

Despite the national economic downturn, Illinois continues to attract visitors from near and far to explore all our state has to offer," DCEO Director Warren Ribley said. "Visitors are staying in our state longer and spending more of their money than ever before, creating good jobs for the hard-working people of our state. Tourism remains a powerful driver in the Illinois economy."

Fewer American tourists visited the Windy City last year. The state of Illinois saw 88 million American visitors last year, which is about a 1% decrease. But 44 million Americans visited Chicago. That's a decrease of 2%. All those visitors, however, stayed longer, and they spent more money. The number of foreign tourists is also up more than 20%.

Over the last five years, the economic impact of tourism has grown by more than \$7.8 billion in Illinois, representing a 34% increase. In addition, the travel industry generated 303,500 jobs for Illinois in 2008. An additional \$33 million in state and local taxes was generated in 2008, bringing our record breaking tax collections to \$2.14 billion in 2008. The total travel generated tax revenues (federal, state and local) save an average Illinois household over \$1,100 in taxes each year.

### FY10 CO-OP MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

We have just finalized our FY10 Marketing Partnership Grant for IBOT for ad space for the upcoming fiscal year. While this is NOT by any means a guarantee of acceptance, we have our fingers crossed. So, we have requested the following ad space – and will begin to take reservations for the ad space. 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 if the IBOT grant were awarded at a 50-50 level OR if awarded at a 40-60 level where IBOT pays 40% and the local partner pays 60% costs.

NITDO has requested one full page in the 2010 Illinois Travel Guide; one full page in the Fall-Holiday 2009 Getaway Guide (newspaper insert), one-half page in the Spring 2010 Getaway Guide (newspaper insert) and one full page in the Summer 2010 Getaway Guide (newspaper insert). If you are interested in working with us on these co-op opportunities, please let us know. The format will be repeated from the current year where pages will be divided into 1/6th units; Each partner will receive one photo/logo, headline, 65 words of copy, name of organization, address, website and phone.

newspaper inserts that will drop in 2009. In the mailings, we showcase several communities with their materials, the ILHC 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. Where else can you mail out your brochure for less than \$.16 each? If interested, call Diane at 815-547-3854.

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)

**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 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.alplm.org](http://www.alplm.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)

Costs for the publications are as follows:

Grant	Full Cost	1/6th Page	1/6th page w/50-50 Grant	1/6th pg w/40-60
Fall-Holiday 2009	\$3,342.16		\$1,671.08	\$2,005.30
IL Travel Guide	\$2,627.66		\$1,313.83	\$1,576.60
Spring 2010	\$3,124.00		\$1,562.00	\$1,874.40
Summer 2010	\$4,023.66		\$2,011.92	\$1,609.53

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.

**SUMMER LEISURE TRAVEL OUTLOOK REMARKABLY STABLE IN DOWN ECONOMY - RESEARCH SHOWS AMERICANS' TRAVEL INTENTIONS, SPENDING EXPECTATIONS SAME OR BETTER THAN 2008**

Americans are expected to take 322 million domestic leisure person-trips during June, July and August 2009, according to the annual summer travel forecast by the U.S. Travel Association. Although a decline of 2.2% from summer 2008, leisure travel remains resilient in the current economic climate. Consumers are expected to take an average of two (2) trips this summer, stay approximately seven (7) nights away from home and spend more than \$900 on their longest summer trip.



“Travelers’ resilience is good news for the travel industry and the entire American economy,” said Roger Dow, president and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association. “According to our forecast, Americans will do their part this summer to stimulate the economy, save and create jobs and strengthen communities from coast-to-coast.”

The April 2009 travelhorizons™ survey by the U.S. Travel Association and Ypartnership, a critical component of the summer travel forecast, shows that an estimated 54% of American households are planning to take at least one (1) leisure trip this summer, compared to 50% at the same time last year. While Americans are watching their travel budgets and discretionary spending, more than half (51%) of these leisure travel planners expect to spend the same amount on their summer vacations this year.

“Consumer spending intentions for this summer are consistent with the patterns we have observed in earlier travelhorizons™ and other recent survey work,” said Peter C. Yesawich, chairman of Ypartnership. “Americans continue to shop aggressively for value pricing when purchasing travel services.”

The travelhorizons™ survey also revealed:

- Six out of ten (57%) intended leisure travelers expect to spend the same number of nights away from home this summer compared to last. Slightly more (22%) travelers expect to spend “more” nights away from home this summer than “fewer” nights (22%).
- Americans plan to take more day trips or long weekend getaways in lieu of week-long vacations. On a positive note for travelers, according to the U.S. Travel Association’s Travel Price Index, the cost of lodging and airfares is down by 6.8% and 4.1%, respectively, through the first quarter of 2009 compared to the same period in 2008.
- Travel deals may entice Americans to travel, especially at the last minute. And the market of “undecided” leisure travelers looms large: an estimated 38 million U.S. adults have not yet decided whether or not they will take a leisure trip this summer through early fall.
- These Americans are waiting to see if the economy and their personal finances improve in the coming months. Travelhorizons™ reveals that 45% of travelers will plan their trip and 39% will book it within two months of departure.
- Consumers are seeking out packages to book and comparison shopping, especially online, to save money.
- While gas prices were the primary deterrent to travel last summer —

**Illinois African-American Travel:**

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

**Illinois Hispanic Travel:**

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

**Chicago Olympics:**

[www.chicagoolympics2016.org](http://www.chicagoolympics2016.org)

**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)



Remember to start looking ahead to Fall for your events and attractions.

Information can be directly loaded onto the NITDO [website](#). IBOT has also been reminding CVBs and TDOs to have their information updated.

Don't be left out!

**NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY CONFERENCE & ILLINOIS BYWAYS GUIDE**

Registration for 2009 National Scenic Byways Conference are being accepted for the 2009 National Scenic Byways Conference, August 23-26, in Denver, Colorado. [Download](#) the conference brochure for complete conference details, including the agenda, workshops, hotel information and registration instructions. This learning and networking event offers fresh perspectives and useful tools to enhance key aspects of byway development and sustainability in these five tracks:

Finance, Corridor Management, Visitor Experience, Byway Organization and Marketing.

Don't forget [www.illinoisbyways.org](http://www.illinoisbyways.org) for the latest on the byways in Illinois. And BIG NEWS is that the byways were able to secure a FHWA Marketing Grant to produce a new Byways Guide, the Illinois Scenic Byway Road Trip. It can be obtained from any of the byways offices or you can also download the complete guide from the website.

hitting an all time high of \$4.11 for a gallon of unleaded regular — gas prices should be less of an issue this summer as they are expected to hover just over \$2 per gallon.

While the domestic leisure travel market has been fairly resilient, a more concerning trend is the expected 9% decline in international travel to the United States for full-year 2009, including a 7% decline in overseas travel. Because international travelers spend more money, averaging \$4,500 per trip to the U.S., increasing travel to the United States is the most efficient form of economic stimulus. A nationally coordinated travel promotion campaign would save U.S. jobs and kick-start economic recovery. Senators Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and John Ensign (R-NV) yesterday introduced the "Travel Promotion Act of 2009" (S. 1023). A similar bill is expected to be introduced soon in the House of Representatives. This legislation can stimulate U.S. economic growth, create 1,000s of new American jobs and generate hundreds of millions of dollars in new tax revenue for communities across the country. The U.S. Travel Association is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the \$770 billion travel industry. U.S. Travel's mission is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the U.S. For more information, visit [ustravel.org](http://ustravel.org).

**NEW OFFICIAL WEBSITE MAKES SUMMER TRAVEL PLANNING EASIER FOR U.S. RESIDENT TRAVELERS**

As millions of Americans search for deals and discounts to build their summer travel plans, the [U.S. Travel Association](#) – together with all 50 state tourism offices and more than 100 convention and visitors bureaus – recently launched [DiscoverAmerica.com](http://DiscoverAmerica.com), the Official Travel and Tourism Website of the United States. This one-stop travel planning source features special deals and offers to help U.S. residents save time and money and get on the road this summer.

**TRAVELGREEN- THE GO-TO SOURCE ON SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL**

America's travel community is going green. Find out how at [TravelGreen.org](http://TravelGreen.org). Find out why environmental sustainability is good business and how business and leisure travelers are seeking eco-friendly travel options. Sustainable travel focuses on reducing the environmental impact of travel and preserving cultural heritage. It generates income and employment for travel destinations while protecting local ecosystems and preserving local culture. Sustainable travel encompasses a holistic approach to the business of travel that creates value for the traveler, economic opportunity for local communities and business opportunities for the industry.

[Urban Environmental Management](#) defines sustainable tourism as "an industry which attempts to make a low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate income, employment, and the conservation of local ecosystems. It is responsible tourism that is both ecologically and culturally sensitive." Other resources include: [Sustainable Travel International](#) and the [International Ecotourism Society](#).

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND NITDO**

Yes, the regional tourism office has joined this new and engaging world of social media. After tutoring from regional partners, educational sessions at the Illinois Scenic Byway conference, Tourism, Technology Workshops (all materials are posted on line for your reference), we took the plunge. Northern Illinois Tourism can be found on Facebook, Twitter and on Flickr. And to FAN or FOLLOW us, or to upload images, all can be easily done from the icons inserted onto our website home page, [www.visitnorthernillinois.com](http://www.visitnorthernillinois.com)

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

### **July 1**

Happy New Year – FY10 Begins!

### **July 10**

American Assoc. Midwest  
Museums Workshops, Beloit, WI

### **July 21**

Illinois Lincoln Highway Coalition  
Annual Mtg, DeKalb

### **July 24-26**

Social Media Boot Camp, Rockford

### **Aug 7**

Deadline: 2009 Fall-Holiday  
Getaway Guide

### **Aug 14-23**

Illinois State Fair, Springfield

### **Aug 23-26**

NSB Conference, Denver, CO

### **Aug 30-Sept 1**

ESTO Conference, Reno/Lake  
Tahoe, NV

### **Aug 31**

Deadline: 2010 Illinois Travel  
Guide

### **Sept 1-3**

Farm Progress Show, Decatur

### **Sept 4-6**

On The Waterfront Festival,  
Rockford

### **Sept 15-17**

Camp Experience, Denver, CO

### **Sept 15-17**

Small Farms Conference,  
Springfield

### **Sept 24**

ATPI Board Meeting, Conference  
Call

### **Sept 30-Oct 2**

IL Assoc of Museums Ann Conf,  
Bloomington-Normal

### **Oct 10**

Midwest Museum of Natural History  
presents Jack Hanna

### **Oct 20-22**

ICCVB Fall Membership Mtg,  
Southwest Illinois

### **Nov 4-5**

ISEN State Convention, Tinley  
Park, IL

### **Nov 26**

Deadline: 2010 Spring Getaway  
Guide

### **Jan 12-16**

The Special Event Show, New  
Orleans, LA

### **Jan 6-8, 2010**

Illinois Specialty Growers  
Conference, Springfield

### **Jan 7**

ATPI Annual Meeting, Springfield

To find us on Facebook, and hopefully become a FAN, go to [facebook.com/VisitNorthernIL](http://facebook.com/VisitNorthernIL). We try to update each day on things to see and do in our area, and we really appreciate you sharing your news with us. So far we have talked about our award-winning wines and wineries along the Northern Illinois Wine Trail, antique and crafts fairs, museum opening, family activities, and festivals. So, share your news with us and we'll be sure to tell others. Our fan base is growing each day, and we encourage you to tell others about the opportunity to know of really fun things to see and do in our area. So, if you have news to share, please shoot me an email so I can blast it out.



And again, we blast our information, in a much condensed format using Twitter, and you can follow us on Twitter @VisitNorthernIL. Our goal is the same as Facebook, to share things visitors can do when planning their getaways. And, we are surprised by those who have decided to follow us: market segments such as Home School Moms, Wine Clubs, Triple AAA office, and more- a broad spectrum and we are trying to find dialogue to fill all interests. So, tell us your news and we'll tell others.

The next big push for NITDO is our Flickr account, [flickr.com/groups/northernillinoistourism](http://flickr.com/groups/northernillinoistourism). You can upload your images of things to see and do in our region and we'll promote them as well. This is our newest form of social media and in the next few months we hope to add in many more images.

## **MEASURING THE VALUE OF ONLINE FAN COMMUNITIES THE TANGIBLE — AND INTANGIBLE — RESULTS OF PARTICIPATING IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES**

*Originally in an article by Gordon Plutsky.* Sure, it makes sense for most businesses to follow their customers into the world of social media. But before doing so, they must have a firm grasp on how to measure the ROI of those ventures. The first step is to create a strategy that dovetails with existing marketing plans and messaging. A company wants to be where its audience is living online, and that will often mean social networking sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn, and services like Twitter. Social media also means a corporate blog: If a firm does not have one, it is already behind the times.

For organizations, social media can serve as a private media channel that allows corporate control of the messaging. Social networks provide an excellent vehicle for pushing out content that supports marketers' objectives, while social sites are great for spreading viral campaigns and word-of-mouth programs. Many companies are using social networks to recruit and invite prospects to Webcasts and live events, both of which are easily tracked by assigning unique URLs and codes.

There is little out-of-pocket cost associated with social media, aside from personnel costs. Even small firms can start a blog with shareware, and there is no cost to post a page or group on Facebook or LinkedIn. Here are some things to remember:

**Work in progress** - Initially, social media should be treated as both an experiment and a work in progress. Some trial and error is necessary to discover what works for each company and industry. One size does not fit all.

Marketers are able to track relationships that were either created or enhanced by social sites or blogs. However, even before a prospect becomes a lead, there are ways to measure traffic and interaction with content. To measure the ROI of new media, the media must in fact be measurable. Fortunately, the various social media are. The majority of social media platforms offer:

- **Quantitative data** - Marketers can gauge success by the number of page views received, responses/comments, content downloaded/embedded, number of shares, RSS feed subscriptions, sign-ups and much more. These numbers offer

indications of how well strategies are driving traffic and facilitating interaction with prospects.



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- *Qualitative measurements* - Hard data doesn't do justice to measuring abstract returns such as an improved corporate reputation, reducing the ratio of negative/positive relationships in the online world, customer retention, strengthening of B-to-B or B-to-C relationships, increased direct dialogue with target audiences, and so forth. While it is hard to put a number on these measures, they are important outcomes of social media strategies.

**Business value** - In a down economy, dwindling budgets make low-cost social media campaigns a popular choice. According to an Online Marketing Summit presentation by Michael Weisfeld, senior Web strategist at BusinessOnLine, "Only 14% of people trust ads, whereas 32% trust bloggers' opinions on products and services." Social media offer a great way to get a direct connection with marketers' audiences. Best of all, a single well-crafted effort can expand exponentially.

Can social media really lead to sales? Yes, according to research conducted among IT decision makers by IDG Connect. IDG found that social content is a significant decision-making factor within the IT investment process. According to their research, buying teams are using social content for educational purposes more than transactional content.

*Gordon Plutsky is director of marketing and research for King Fish Media*

### **TIME MAGAZINE EXPLAINS TWITTER as posted by Mashable Social Media Guide**

While an appearance on Oprah back in April may have marked Twitter's official jump into the mainstream, the coronation might be June 5, 2009, Time Magazine cover story about the company, entitled, "How Twitter Will Change the Way We Live." How does Time explain the phenomenon to its audience of more than 20 million readers, median age 47.2? Mashable, the Social Media Guide's Adam Ostrow offered an interesting insight (complete article can be found at [mashable.com](http://mashable.com)) Here are a few choice excerpts:

*On how Twitter works:* "As a social network, Twitter revolves around the principle of followers. When you choose to follow another Twitter user, that user's tweets appear in reverse chronological order on your main Twitter page."

*On overcoming the initial feeling that Twitter is mundane and pointless:* "We don't think it at all moronic to start a phone call with a friend by asking how her day is going. Twitter gives you the same information without your even having to ask."

*On the power of hashtags:* "Yes, it was built entirely out of 140-character messages, but the sum total of those tweets added up to something truly substantive, like a suspension bridge made of pebbles."

*On Twitter's lasting influence:* "But the key elements of the Twitter platform — the follower structure, link-sharing, real-time searching — will persevere regardless of Twitter's fortunes, just as Web conventions like links, posts and feeds have endured over the past decade."

*And some hyperbole:* "There's a kind of resilience here that is worth savoring. The weather reports keep announcing that the sky is falling, but here we are — millions of us — sitting around trying to invent new ways to talk to one another."

