



**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. Sessions at the ISEN State Convention held last November in Tinley Park. Also included are the Economic Impact Stats by County for 2008. Look at your county or a neighboring county. If you are one of our legislative partners, you can pull the specific counties in your district. As soon as the 2009 numbers are available they will be posted.

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)

**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)

**NEW WORKSHOP COMING JULY 28th - STILL TIME TO SIGN UP**

Social Media has become all the rage and has been used effectively in the tourism industry. How can you extend your current efforts of this media to reach potential visitors to your destinations, attractions and events? Join **Anne Hornyak**, (Social Media Strategist, Tourism Industry Twitterist and blogger of [Tourism Land](#)) from **Go See Tell Network**, for **Meaningful Social Media in the Tourism Industry: Strategies, Best Practices and Analysis** and learn:

- help in clarifying the value of Social Media
- how to “stop playing around” - start implementing firm & effective Social Media strategies
- insights of how to answer the important question of what to report and why

Workshop will be held at the Clock Tower Inn and Resort in Rockford with excellent access from I-90 and I-39. Focus will be Facebook and Twitter, but other topics will be briefly touched upon for this day-long workshop that will begin with registration at 8:30 a.m. with an continental breakfast before the official start of the day at 9:00 a.m. working until lunch and then after lunch more insights, before the day concludes at 3:00 p.m. NITDO and the Illinois Special Event Network (ISEN) are sponsoring this workshop.

Be sure to sign-up your Social Media coordinator for your organization, bring your laptops, ideas and questions. We will have a place to plug in and internet access available. This will be an interactive, hands-on event for organizations that have a Social Media presence. Sign-up soon as space will be limited. Deadline for Registration is July 26th and cost will be \$50.00.

**10 STATES CASHING IN ON TOURISM.....AN ARTICLE WORTH SHARING**

There was a great article that appeared on Thursday July 15, 2010 in the SFGate.com online news, written by Claire Bradley, provided by Investopedia. We've been encouraged to share this great message with legislators, partners and stakeholders. Please read.....



*At a time of economic doom and gloom, it's easy to forget that tourism still keeps many states afloat - to the tune of billions of dollars. As of 2009, tourism brought \$704 billion to the United States, employing an estimated 17.4 million people. So which states rake in the biggest bucks from its visitors? Here's the top ten.*

**1. California**

The Golden State is the tourism powerhouse of America, generating \$87.7 billion annually in 2009, and accounting for 851,000 jobs. With its national parks, tourist attractions like the Golden Gate Bridge and various theme parks, plus expansive beaches and wine country, California has a variety of tourist hotspots throughout the state. What's interesting to note

## **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.disfrutailinois.com](http://www.disfrutailinois.com)

## **Upper Midwest CVB Conference**

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

## **SNEAK PEAK...SAVE THE DATE**



Staff of  
NITDO and  
ILHC has

been serving on the Conference Planning Committee for an exciting educational opportunity sponsored by the American Road magazine. Save the Date for the **American Road Foundation Conference** to be held **September 21-23, 2010 in Joliet**, a terrific location on the Illinois Lincoln Highway for the event. This conference will provide education, networking and activities along with exhibits unique to organizations involved in the preservation, economic development and promotion of historic highways and auto trails. Be sure to visit [www.americanroadfoundation.org](http://www.americanroadfoundation.org) for more information. Also, ILHC has the conference brochure posted on our website.

## **CORONADO PERFORMING ARTS CENTER WINS NATIONAL CONTEST**

The Coronado Performing Arts Center in Rockford can officially claim the title of the Top Wonder of the United States. The majestic theater in downtown Rockford was the top vote-getter overall in an online contest by AOL and the U.S. Travel Association, receiving more than 6,500 votes. A last-minute rally by fans and an organized push through social media helped move the Coronado to first place. In addition to bragging rights, the theater is now listed in the AOL photo gallery [news.travel.aol.com](http://news.travel.aol.com).

The Coronado was nominated by the

is that Californians are their own largest pool of tourists - roughly 80% of visits are made by Californians themselves. (Despite its strong tourism industry, all is not well in California. Find out more in Will California Go Bust?)

## **2. Florida**

With its expansive coastline and favorable winter weather, it's not surprising that Florida comes in second on the list of states earning the most tourism dollars, grossing \$70.5 billion. Disneyworld and its surrounding theme parks, Key West and Miami are just some of the many tourist attractions luring visitors from around the world. Tourism keeps 757,100 people employed in the Sunshine State.

## **3. New York**

The state of New York makes about \$54 billion annually from tourists visiting the state, keeping 423,000 people on the payroll. Visitors to New York City account for about half of this income, not surprisingly with the many iconic tourist attractions like the Empire State Building and the Statue of Liberty that New York City has to offer. Tourism makes up 4.9% of jobs in The Big Apple. (Find out where New York ranks as far as careers go in Top 10 Cities For A Career In Finance.)

## **4. Nevada**

When you think of Nevada, you may first think of Las Vegas. The state has many other attractions, including Lake Tahoe, that help bring its total tourism income to \$54 billion in 2008, a figure which has decreased slightly during the recession. Visitors to Nevada keep 489,000 people employed, accounting for a whopping 30% of its employment.

## **5. Texas**

Texas does everything big, including tourism. The state took in roughly \$51.8 billion in 2009, keeping 525,700 employed. Since Texas is so expansive, about half of its tourism income is generated by its own residents. Tourism provides employees of the industry with an annual \$15.4 billion payroll. (Texas appears on another list. Check out 7 States With No Income Tax.)

## **6. New Jersey**

The Garden State offers plenty to do for tourists. From Atlantic City's excitement to Princeton's culture, tourism brings in \$36 billion annually. Visitors to New Jersey support 203,000 jobs directly as of 2009.

## **7. Georgia**

Tourism is just peachy in Georgia, accounting for \$34.8 billion in revenue and employing 241,500 people. Georgia visitors spend an average of \$112 a day to visit state attractions like its many historic sites and popular beaches. Time will tell how the recent oil spill will impact Georgia tourism, but as of now, the state is still one of the top-grossing states when it comes to tourism in the United States.

## **8. Illinois**

Tourism is big business in the Land of Lincoln, bringing in nearly \$30.7 billion. Illinois gets most of its domestic visitors from within the state and its neighbors Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan and Missouri. Tourism keeps 303,500 people employed - one in ten jobs in Illinois.

## **9. Pennsylvania**

Nearly 140 million people visit Pennsylvania annually, bringing in \$21.6 billion dollars. With its rich heritage, outdoor entertainment and festivals and wineries, Pennsylvania keeps 214,800 employed. Like many of the other states listed, visitors mostly come from within the state itself or from neighboring states like New York and New Jersey.

Rockford Area CVB as an architectural wonder last May in AOL's Explore America program, in partnership with U.S. Travel Association. The program encouraged web users to select the greatest wonders of the United States by casting their votes online. Regionally partners worked with the Coronado to promote the contest through local and regional media, and coordinate an online and social media strategy that would rally the community to support the region's "crown jewel." You can view this majestic jewel of a theater online photo tour at [www.coronadopac.org](http://www.coronadopac.org).

**NITDO CONTINUES TO PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE AT ILLINOIS OASES**



We've worked with partners from the Tollway Authority on hosting a new event, Safety Fest at the Belvidere

Oasis, the weeks leading up to Memorial Day and July 4th weekends. Regional partners provided information, gift items and as manned tables near our visitor Information kiosk. More of these events are planned as other prime holiday travel weekend approach....we're back the Oases the week leading up Labor Day (look for us on September 1st at the Belvidere Oasis). There will once again be a mini-expo where regional partners can showcase their destination, distribute coupons and trinkets, and talk to the visitors about things to see and do. We will be once again asking partners to work with us as the next and final event happens...mark your calendars. And even if you can't participate, please consider sending us special giveaways or items to be used in our regional gift basket. Thanks!

**IOWA VISITOR CENTER STUDY CAN BE REVIEWED**

No one can truly understand the value of staff members working to assist travel planning, those in the front lines of our CVBs, regional tourism offices, at visitor centers and in Tourism Information Centers or Welcome Centers at our gateways. The person-to-person relationship makes people feel more positive about their experience, and generally influences their trip (and decisions to extend their stay) in hard-core dollars.

**10. Virginia**

Tourists in Virginia bring in an impressive \$19.7 billion, visiting historic sites, theme parks and museums to employ 210,620 people. Tourism income doesn't end there, however, the state estimates that the tax revenue generated by tourism keeps many thousands of teachers and police officers employed every year - which is great news for the state's economy and employment.

**The Bottom Line**

These numbers are impressive, though it's important to note that most states saw a significant decline in tourism in 2009, costing jobs and tax revenue. States where tourism is a large source of income have started more aggressive advertising campaigns and updated websites to lure visitors and money back to their cities and towns. Since then, many states are showing signs of rebounding tourism - hopefully a sign of good things to come. (Don't have the money to take a trip? Check out 9 Summer Staycations That Feel Like Vacations.)

**ILHC MURALS....SO MANY FANTASTIC STORIES COME TO LIFE**

The Illinois Lincoln Highway is cranking this along. In the past few weeks, murals (and great coverage ensued) installed in the Fulton at the end of June. In the next few weeks look for murals to be installed in North



Aurora, University Park and Rock Falls...and more are in the works for Malta, Geneva, Ashton, Maple Park...just to name a few.. It is a tremendous undertaking, and we are continually amazed at the stories the artist brings to life. Fulton mural showcases their bridge over the Mississippi River; University Park highlights the famed travels of the Van Buren sisters; and North Aurora is



describing their Exposition Park, quite the attraction of the day along the Fox River...that's enough for now, but WOW more are coming and they are great too!

To see the ILHC murals already completed; you just need to check out the website ([www.drivelincolnhighway.com](http://www.drivelincolnhighway.com)) and we'll post updates on their progress. There is a great new web feature just unveiled. Note: 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:Sue.Hronik) 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.



The State of Iowa recently conducted a Welcome Center Survey, talking with people who were utilizing the services of Iowa Welcome Centers by providing travel information and encouraging travelers to extend their stay. Key findings for 2009 showed the 19 Iowa Welcome Centers served nearly 202,149 travel parties, an increase of 5.3% over 2008, when 192,018 travel parties were served. Iowa Welcome Center travelers spent an estimated \$180 million during their trips in Iowa. Iowa Welcome Center travel counselors influenced 32% of the travelers to extend their stay. Travelers who extended their stay spent an additional \$25 million. To view the complete report, check out the [link](#). Interesting reading and validates the importance of keeping information and people in the traveling public.

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

#### **July 28**

Social Media ROI Workshop, Clock Tower Resort, Rockford

#### **July 30**

Lincoln Highway (twilight) Parade (part of Kishwaukee fest), DeKalb

#### **August 12-20**

Illinois State Fair, Springfield

#### **September 6**

HOLIDAY – Office Closed

#### **September 12-14**

Upper Midwest CVB 2010 Fall Conference, Quad Cities

#### **September 19-20**

Vintage Illinois Wine Festival, Utica

#### **September 21-23**

American Road Foundation Conference, Joliet

#### **October 6-8**

ICCVB Fall Quarterly Meeting, Quincy

#### **November 3-4**

ISEN State Convention, Tinley Park

#### **November 19-21**

Nouveau Celebrations, Galena

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### **TOURISM MATERIALS AVAILABLE**

Don't forget that our small loading dock is over-flowing. 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, [ww.enjoyillinois.com](http://ww.enjoyillinois.com) to download. And, of course we think our 2010 Northern Illinois Visitor Guide is exceptional as another great piece for visitors to utilize when planning their trip to our region. We can deliver in

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### **FIND US AND OUR PARTNERS ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER**

Remember to visit our [Home Page](#) where 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 the you will find icons to click on to find VisitNorthernIL on Facebook, Twitter and Flickr!



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

### **FY11 UPDATE**

ICCVB has provided an update on the grant status and information to date. As many of our partners know by now, the Governor announced drastic cuts in state spending for FY11. This unprecedented action is expected to cause the elimination of many vital programs that serve the most vulnerable in our state. In addition, many state vendors and grantees that have been experiencing delays in payment over the past few years of over 90 days will be delayed even further.

The state hotel tax receipts are deposited DIRECTLY into both the Local Tourism and Convention Bureau Fund (LTCB) and International Tourism Fund. This is different from the Tourism Promotion Fund (TPF) where state hotel tax receipts first pass through the state's general fund. All of the state's other tourism programs are funded through the Tourism Promotion Fund (TPF). This includes the statewide advertising and marketing program, and the Regional Tourism Development Offices (RTDO's), among other programs.

#### **Additional information includes:**

- DCEO was cut \$5 million for their total overall budget. Currently DCEO is in the process of determining where cuts and adjustments need to be made in order to address this reduction in their budget.
- All Tourism Information Centers (TIC's) have closed effective 6/30/10
- The State's Call Center has all calls now directed to the Springfield IOT office.
- All fulfillment requests made by visitors will be referred to the State's website to be downloaded rather than having physical information being mailed.
- While there are outstanding invoices that need to be paid by the State, the Governor stated that those bills are targeted to be paid by 12/31/10.

person if we're heading in your direction, or if you are coming our way. Contact [Mary](#) at the office or send an email. You can also download our guide directly from our website. 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 and working out delivery as mentioned earlier. And at the end of June, we had two new rack cards delivered...there is new information for the **Northern Illinois Wine Trail** (great news on our 25+ wineries and tasting rooms) and one from the **ILHC on their Interpretive Gazebos and Murals**.

**Small Business Bill May Contain Online Hotel Tax Amendment; DMOs Support TRIP Act**

Reports from Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. indicate that an amendment may be introduced to **H.R. 5297, the Small Business Lending Fund Act**, that would permit Online Travel Companies (OTCs) to remit hotel occupancy taxes based only on the discounted wholesale rate they pay for the rooms they book rather than on the full retail rate that customers pay for those same rooms. [See Full Article](#)



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**TRAVEL EXPECTED TO RISE MODESTLY IN 2010**

Even though we have not had the release of the 2009 Economic Impact on Illinois Counties, we have some optimistic news from the US Travel Association. In June, the USTA said more consumers are ready to take a break from home this year with 2.3 percent more vacation travel expected than in 2009. "We think people will take a vacation from 'staycations,'" IHS Global Insight economist Steve Piraino said, the Christian Science Monitor reported Monday.

"Staycation" refers to a vacation spent without leaving home, which became more popular in the past two years while the economy suffered. Piraino predicted travel would not reach the levels of 2006 or 2007, but would still improve this year.

In the travel industry's favor, about 1.1 million jobs have been added to the economy since the first of the year, and "People feel better off and more confident in their financial prospects," said Suzanne Cook, senior vice president of research at the travel association.

The industry is also finding support from a stronger dollar. A \$316 expense last year in one of the 16 countries that share the euro as currency now totals \$244, the newspaper said. A stronger dollar amounts to a discount across the board in Europe, not just in hotel expenses, but in meals, souvenirs, taxi rides and tickets to museums.

**BE A PART OF THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY PARADE**

One of the greatest American traditions of all time...a hometown parade and this is one of the first events that the Illinois Lincoln Highway Coalition is taking on a significant role.

All Lincoln Highway communities in and along the corridor are invited. Represent your town, city or village with an entry in the parade! The theme is Through the Years, scheduled at a special twilight time; this new, exciting event is part of a weekend celebration, Kishwaukee Fest



featuring classic style Drum Corp shows and the Drum Corps Festival of Champions as they return to DeKalb through FunME Events.



Plan now to have an entry in the Lincoln Highway Parade on July 30, 2010 at 7:00 PM in downtown DeKalb. As a sponsor of this event the ILHC is happy to offer their community partners one unit entered FREE in the

parade! So gather your elected officials, veteran and military units, boy scouts (it's their 100 year anniversary!), bands, dancers, special groups, local pageant winners, build a float and anything else that says "we are proud to be a part of the Lincoln Highway" to enter in the parade! Get your parade application through the ILHC office, just email; [Sue](#) or call 815-547-3854 and be a part of this exciting Lincoln Highway Parade! Look out...here we come!