

Illinois Tourism News from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Summer *Illinois Now!* available, May 9.
- ▶ National Tourism Week is May 10-18.
- ▶ Illinois Tourism Road Show will be traversing the state May 12-14.
- ▶ International Pow Wow '03 in St. Louis, May 17-21. Illinois reception in Collinsville, May 19.
- ▶ IBOT's summer advertising campaign launches May 19.
- ▶ Memorial Day – IBOT offices closed May 26.
- ▶ Southwestern Illinois regional call center training (Chicago), May 28.

### MESSAGE FROM THE STATE TRAVEL DIRECTOR



Jan Kostner

With summer just around the corner, there is no better time to attract travelers to Illinois. We are already seeing dramatic results from our spring campaign with the number of calls to our call center almost tripling during the week of April 21. I am pleased to report that IBOT is embarking on a number of initiatives that will make this summer's campaign another success.

At the center of the campaign is a brand new television spot that will debut throughout the state on May 21. Utilizing state-of-the-art technology, images of high-profile destination drivers will appear to "morph" into each other. For instance, antique shoppers in Galena will see beluga whales from Chicago's Shedd Aquarium. Other featured attractions will include Route 66 and The Garden of the Gods.

The message is clear. Illinois offers an abundance of possibilities so you can explore all the facets of you. Our advertising spotlights the great diversity of

offerings throughout the state. To reflect the times and some concern about travel, our message is more low-key than in the past. The emphasis will be placed on travel as a means to achieve personal growth and meaningful experiences.

We are also proud of another new effort. On April 22, the debut issue of our Enjoy Illinois eNewsletter was released. Entitled "Illinois' Guide to Sensational Spring," it marks the beginning of a new method for getting our message out to consumers. Quarterly issues will focus on the most up-to-date and impressive events and attractions throughout the state.

Regular features of the eNewsletter include "Out and About," "Seasonal Showcase," "Great Getaways" and "Illinois Factoids." Users will be encouraged to link to the [enjoyillinois.com](http://enjoyillinois.com) Web site or call 800-2CONNECT to order the Illinois Travel Kit and receive personal travel planning assistance. Our first issue has been e-mailed to over 30,000 recipients. The feedback has been very positive and we expect to increase our subscriber database with each issue.

Fresh from last summer's successful run, we are again producing a summer coupon book that will provide incentives for travelers to find great deals in Illinois. Due to last year's success,

*(Continued on page 2)*

# STATEWIDE NEWS

## Summer sizzles with *Illinois Now!*

Travelers can get a head start on summer vacation planning with the latest edition of *Illinois Now!*

Available next week, the free 52-page seasonal publication offers an in-depth look at unique summer getaway ideas, outdoor activities and exhibits for travelers of any age.

The "Family Fun" cover story will help travelers learn more about not-to-be-missed attractions and activities, ranging from exotic zoos and hands-on museums to rip-roaring water parks around the state.

Bicycle enthusiasts can get into gear once they've read "Free Wheeling," an overview of some of the best bike trails in the state. Lewis and Clark history buffs can plan their own epic adventures with "Road to Discovery," a four-day guided tour of sites and attractions. And when evening falls, "Night Moves" can point travelers in the direction of some of the hippest and hottest nightspots throughout the state.

Shoppers can discover their next great find with the help of "Antiquing Across Illinois," which points antiquers in the direction of the best shops and towns throughout the state known for their bounty of heirloom treasures. When it's time to dine, the ultimate warm weather option is alfresco. "Take it Outside" gives an insider's scoop to the finest outdoor dining spots in Illinois.

## MESSAGE FROM THE STATE TRAVEL DIRECTOR *(Continued)*

we are printing an additional 20,000 books so that 50,000 coupon books will be made available, each book containing 100 coupons. The program will run from late June through Labor Day. We are putting a strong emphasis on producing high-quality coupons, encouraging two-for-one offers and substantial discounts.

Value and savings also play a major role in our travel packages program. Quality travel packages are indispensable in the effort to encourage travelers to plan multi-night visits. By adjoining the value of an accommodation stay to a hearty meal or a fun-filled attraction, customers will be getting their money's worth this summer in Illinois. Keep an eye out for a Travel Packages Micro-site, coming soon to enjoyillinois.com.

And even more good news. The demand has been so high for the

spring issue of *Illinois Now!*, our supply has just about been depleted. To keep up with this demand we will be increasing our distribution for the summer edition from 150,000 to 200,000 copies. We are also very proud to be adding the African-American Travel Guide to our brochure options. Illinois' great diversity is one of our true strengths and, by increasing our efforts to reach out to the African-American and Hispanic communities, we are expanding our market base.

As you can see, this is a time of great activity and optimism. By sharing ideas and working together, we can make the summer of 2003 a new beginning for the growth and success of our industry.

Best regards,



The summer issue of *Illinois Now!* also offers readers the chance to win a grand prize that includes a two-night stay for two at the landmark Hotel Burnham in Chicago's Loop, plus a gift certificate good for a Broadway in Chicago production; the second prize provides lodging at Landers House in a luxury cottage along the scenic I&M Canal in Utica.

To obtain a free copy of *Illinois Now!* or for more information about traveling throughout Illinois this summer, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 800-2CONNECT or visit enjoyillinois.com. Copies of the seasonal magazine are also available at tourism information centers, convention and visitors bureaus, regional tourism

development offices and state park lodges throughout Illinois.

## On the road again

State Travel Director Jan Kostner and crew will be hitting the road to spread the good news of Illinois tourism. This year's Road Show will be held May 12-14 in conjunction with National Tourism Week.

The 2003 Road Show will visit Chicago, Rockford, the Quad Cities, Springfield and Carbondale, and will give IBOT representatives the opportunity to talk to industry stakeholders and members of the media about the good news of Illinois tourism. The presentation

will include an industry update – complete with the 2002 visitor numbers, an overview of the spring and summer advertising campaigns and associated efforts, as well as other exciting IBOT initiatives.

New this year, Jan will be participating in tourism roundtables in each of the host communities where key members of the industry can discuss issues and ideas, as well as get to know the new state travel director. The participants will be limited to no more than 10 in each community and will be coordinated by the host CVB.

Presentation information is as follows:

*Monday, May 12*  
TBD - Chicago  
2 p.m. - Rockford, Starlight Theatre

*Tuesday, May 13*  
9 a.m. - Quad Cities, John Deere Pavilion  
3 p.m. - Springfield, State House press room

*Wednesday, 14*  
9 a.m. Carbondale, University Mall

### **African-American travel guide**

Debuting this month, the Illinois Bureau of Tourism is giving visitors a new tool to “see what’s up” in Illinois with the launch the new African-American Travel Guide. The new guide features a sampling of historic sites, tours, arts and entertainment venues, restaurants and other points of interest relative to the African-American community.

In addition to the state map, the listing of tourist information centers, convention and visitors

bureau offices, and Illinois accommodations that are listed are from the NAACP’s “Consumer Choice Guide.” The guide is available to consumers calling 800-2CONNECT or by visiting [enjoyillinois.com](http://enjoyillinois.com).

### **Singing the blues abroad**

As part of a mission to promote Chicago in the UK, DCEO’s International Trade Office sent

Chicago Blues legends Willie Kent and the Gents, Eddie Clearwater and Bonnie Lee to participate in “Chicago Night” at the 15<sup>th</sup> Burnley National Blues Festival, near Manchester, UK. English ears perked up at the soulful sound of the Chicago blues, and coverage of the event was featured in publications including the *Lancashire Evening Telegraph*. Further coverage is expected on national television programs including RI:SE and GMTV.

### **INDUSTRY INSIDER: REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS HOLBROOK**

*To help you get to know who’s who in Illinois tourism, ITN profiles an industry leader each month. This month we introduce a true friend of tourism, State Representative Thomas Holbrook.*

Representative Thomas “Tom” Holbrook believes it is important that all families have a voice in state government. As the son of two working parents and a father himself, he knows first hand all of the challenges families face.

A true tourism advocate, Holbrook has been instrumental in raising awareness of the tourism industry. It was at his request and the approval of Speaker Madigan that the House Tourism Committee came into existence. Holbrook knows that tourism is a major industry and that change can occur with additional legislative support. Holbrook has been the chairman of the House Tourism Committee for the past four years, and has sponsored legislation to support the growth of the industry including legislation to create a Tourism Coordinating Committee, where all state tourism-related industries meet to organize collective efforts that result in the growth of tourism.

An Illinois state representative since 1995, Holbrook has a distinguished record of government service and is a tireless advocate for the tourism industry. Born in St. Louis, Mo., Holbrook attended Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville where he majored in social science and government. Before he was elected to office, Holbrook was employed in the private sector for 33 years, 25 of which he spent with the Ethyl Corporation in Sauget. He began his political career as a St. Clair County Board Member, serving the 10<sup>th</sup> district for 14 years and actively participating in several committees.

Holbrook continues to be actively involved in the district with several community, fraternal and service organizations, such as the Belleville Optimists Club, the Illinois Center for Autism Advisory Board and the United Way Legislative Board.

Holbrook and his wife, Molly, and daughter, Susan, reside in Belleville.

To add Representative Holbrook to your mailing list, his address is:

9200 West Main Street, Ste. 4  
Belleville, Illinois 62223

# NATIONAL NEWS

## Business travel may start to recover in second half of 2003

In the second in a series of travel outlook reports, the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) said there is some hope we could see the beginnings of a business travel recovery.

The TIA study says the U.S. economy will strengthen in the second half of this year and there are signs of improving consumer confidence. However, it is not likely the level of business travel will match the hey-days of the late '90s again "for quite some time to come," considering the major changes that have occurred in business travel policies and the success of new technologies to substitute for at least some business trips. The TIA report noted that business travel declined 5.5 percent in 2002 over 2001 and was down nearly 9 percent in 2002 over 2000. For near-term 2003, travel intentions remain weak, said TIA.

Source: *Travel Advance*

## Travel intentions remain high, but Americans delay booking trips

The second wave of the War Impact Survey produced by the TIA shows that war came and went without devastating the travel and tourism industry. The survey did show that certain sectors such as airlines and outbound travel continue to be severely affected, but travel intentions overall remain stable. Currently, 82 percent of

Americans plan to take at least one trip this spring or summer. TIA said the latest survey shows that the sluggish economy continues to have a greater effect on the travel industry than world events. Forty-five percent of Americans who intend to travel this spring or summer still have not made plans or booked their trips, a percentage unchanged from the first wave of the survey conducted March 20-25.

Source: *Travel Advance*

## Summer vacation planning sparks upswing in travel, AAA says

As the summer vacation season approaches, interest in travel is on the upswing, especially drive trips as AAA's online routing request increased for the fourth straight week to their highest level of the year. The weekly AAA National Travel Barometer shows requests for online TripTik routings for the week of April 14 are up more than 5 percent at 118,900, compared to 112,700 the week of April 7. Overall travel agency bookings increased 3 percent, with bookings for cruises and tour packages leading the way, while visits to AAA travel offices rose substantially. The AAA barometer is based on a sample of 13 AAA clubs representing about half of AAA's 46 million members.

Source: *Travel Advance*

## At their leisure

As the peak season dawns, this is shaping up as one of the most retrograde leisure-travel seasons in memory. "There's a pent-up demand for travel, for sure, but people are really skittish," says Cathy Keefe, spokeswoman for TIA. More people will be traveling by car this summer, to venture into scenic areas of the country, away

from crowds and cities, and to stay in moderately priced hotels and motels. For anyone looking to buck the trend, however, now is the time to book a summer vacation overseas.

Source: *Travel Advance*

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