

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Fall issue of *Illinois Now!* will be available on August 14
- ▶ IBOT office closed on Labor Day, September 1
- ▶ New Navy Pier Tourism Information Center open for business
- ▶ Illinois Council of Convention and Visitor Bureaus (ICCVB) quarterly meeting in Rockford, August 11-13
- ▶ Team Illinois' Educational Forum in Rock Island, August 20-22
- ▶ 151st Illinois State Fair in Springfield, August 8-17
- ▶ The Illinois Summer Savings Coupon Book expires on Labor Day

MESSAGE FROM THE STATE TRAVEL DIRECTOR



Jan Kostner

Fall 2003 is a time of great potential for the Illinois tourism industry. It is our goal to distinguish Illinois from its Midwestern neighbors through the development of a memorable and unique brand image. With all that our state has to offer during this season, there is no reason we should not "own" the fall.

Our fall campaign will be a concentrated program that lasts six weeks, from September 2 to October 12. We will focus on fewer markets with an emphasis on Chicago, St. Louis, Champaign, Springfield, Rockford and Peoria. The budget is set for \$1 million in media buys and \$50,000 for production.

The branding message is based on the communication platform of "Be who you want to be in Illinois." This message has a wide appeal in attracting visitors who wish to use travel as a way to achieve personal growth. An alternative slogan might be, "Find yourself in Illinois this fall."

For example, you can "be" an adventurer by hiking through the

Garden of the Gods or Starved Rock State Park. You can "be" a teacher by taking your family to the Lincoln sites in Springfield or one of Chicago's many museums. This branding strategy also emphasizes the great diversity that Illinois has to offer and can be coordinated to promote many of our destination drivers.

Another aspect of our creative focus will be our retail messaging efforts. This will include themed weekends, getaway travel packages and specific price point information. Promotions through *Illinois Now!* and enjoyillinois.com will also be integral to the success of our campaign.

We've determined that the specific types of destinations that fit best with our branding image are outdoor locations that highlight fall themes. State parks, arboretums and gardens are ideal for showcasing the beautiful colors of nature in the autumn. Downstate fall festivals are also an exciting way to showcase the season. And Illinois Art Week in October will present a great opportunity to feature art festivals in towns such as Galena.

In other news, we are proud to announce the opening of a new Tourism Information Center (TIC) at Navy Pier on Chicago's lakefront. This newest of 15 TICs operating across the state is located in the Family Pavilion at the information desk. State

(Continued on Page 2)

STATEWIDE NEWS

Capture the essence of fall with *Illinois Now!*

Available in mid-August, the seasonal magazine takes a peek at Illinois' galleries, Amish country and wine country, new sites and attractions, as well as provides a complete listing of fall festivals and events. The cover story, "Postcard Journeys," takes visitors on a breathtaking tour to some of the most picturesque spots in the state.

The fall issue of *Illinois Now!* also gives readers the chance to win a grand prize that includes a two-night stay for two at Chicago's Drake Hotel, plus a \$500 gift certificate from the new Bloomingdale's Home & Furniture Store. Readers will also have the chance to win the second prize, a Champaign County getaway, including two-night accommodations, a night of theater, dinner for two, and more.

Art lovers can peruse the "Paint the Town" article and learn about galleries and artists across the state. And visitors interested in taking a cultural journey can plan their next trip to Illinois' Amish Country. "A World Apart" offers a glimpse into a simpler, relaxing way of life enjoyed by the Amish who call the Central Illinois towns of Arthur, Arcola and Tuscola home.

For a taste of Illinois, "Illinois Wine Country" sends vino enthusiasts on fall getaways to discover many of the wineries around the state. Illinois currently has 33 wineries.

MESSAGE FROM THE STATE TRAVEL DIRECTOR *(Continued)*

employees and Navy Pier representatives will provide Navy Pier, Chicago and Illinois information to the public.

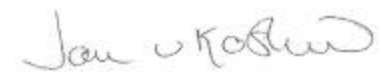
As one of Illinois' top tourist attractions, Navy Pier is an ideal location for maximum outreach to the public. Every year, millions of people pass by the center and have the opportunity to discover what our state has to offer. Increased signage, technological resources and displays are planned to further interest in the TIC and take advantage of this prominent location.

We are also looking forward to an early August unveiling for a new and improved Illinois tourism Web site. Enjoyillinois.com is soon to

feature an updated and user-friendly search engine on its home page. This function will allow searches by both interest (accommodations, dining, travel packages, etc.) and destination location. Along with new features, such as the upcoming Lewis and Clark micro-site, this advance will make our online marketing program all the more effective.

I look forward to working with all of you during this very exciting time for tourism in Illinois.

Best regards,



Shoppers won't want to miss "On the Home Front," which takes readers to some of the best furniture and home accessories stores in Illinois. And there's no better way to refuel in Illinois, than with a bit of "Home Cookin'" served up by some of the tastiest mom-and-pop restaurants around.

To obtain a free copy of *Illinois Now!* or for more information on traveling throughout Illinois this fall, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com.

Copies of the seasonal magazine are also available at Illinois tourism information centers, convention and visitors bureaus, regional tourism development offices and state park lodges.

Award-winning efforts

Illinois' award-winning seasonal magazine, *Illinois Now!*, has another honor to add to the

collection. On behalf of IBOT, Redwood Custom Communications received two Apex awards – one for illustration and typography for the spring 2003 "Making Tracks" illustration, and one for one-of-a-kind government publications.

APEX awards recognize excellence in publications work by professional communicators. They are based on graphic design, editorial content and the ability to achieve overall communications excellence.

Congratulations to everyone who works on *Illinois Now!* and thanks for your continued commitment to producing this first-class magazine.

Summer eNewsletter delivers results

Following the success of the spring eNewsletter, Illinois' summer eNewsletter was also met

with a great response. The summertime edition was distributed via email on June 20 to more than 44,000 enjoyillinois.com and *Illinois Now!* subscribers – a 40 percent increase from the spring eNewsletter. Summer eNewsletter recipients expressed the most interest in learning more about Illinois' attractions – amusement parks, museums and zoos – and heading outdoors to experience the state parks.

The Illinois eNewsletter will continue to reach consumers with fall and winter editions. The fall eNewsletter will be distributed September 3, focusing on Illinois' scenic spots, wine country and fall events.

International visiting media

In June, IBOT welcomed journalists from the United Kingdom and Germany for familiarization trips in the Chicagoland area. From June 2-6, Robert Chilton of UK magazine *OK!* (circulation: 700,000) visited Chicago for a destination piece focused on celebrities. He participated in a Chicago Greeter Tour, enjoyed an architectural river cruise and even met George Clooney at Le Passage. From June 11-17, German journalist Detlef Hennies and photographer Thomas Metelmann visited Chicago and Chicagoland on behalf of Germany's leading golf publication, *GOLFMagazin* (circulation: 54,000). They attended the U.S. Open at Olympia Fields Country Club and played golf at courses such as Pheasant Run, Thunder-Hawk and Balmoral Woods.

New and improved in Illinois: Rockford's Starlight Theater

One of Illinois' longest-running summer theater programs is now housed in one of the country's most dramatic outdoor theaters

Rockford's Starlight Theater, complete with a one-of-a-kind retractable roof, is located on the campus of Rock Valley College and is home to three musicals and the Rockford Symphony Orchestra.

When closed, six triangular panels made of wood and steel provide shelter to the 1,042-seat theater.

When weather conditions are right, the mechanized panels push up one after the other creating an open-air star pattern so that theatergoers can enjoy the evening sky.

For more information, contact the Starlight Theater at (815)921-2160 or www.rockvalleycollege.edu.

INDUSTRY INSIDER: PATI FLANNERY-MEYERING



To help you get to know who's who in Illinois tourism, ITN profiles an industry leader each month. This month we introduce the director of marketing and advertising sales for Preprint Publishing, Pati Flannery-Meyering.

Pati Flannery-Meyering has been devoted to showcasing Illinois with seasonal newspaper inserts produced by Preprint Publishing for more than 17 years. These cooperative programs have joined public and private sector tourism partners to bring awareness, visitation and economic impact to Illinois and its tourism industry.

Pati and Preprint Publishing are proud partners with Sue Vos, president of the Illinois Council of Convention and Visitor Bureaus, to produce (in-kind) the first official directory of convention and visitors bureaus and regional tourism development offices. This comprehensive directory includes a snapshot of each destination marketing organization, their pro-

ducts, geographic territory and their economic impact on the Illinois tourism industry.

Pati assists her clients with documentation for marketing partnership grants, responds to visitation conversion studies and cooperative advertising partnerships with attractions, destinations and hotels to better promote Illinois as a premium leisure tourism destination.

As an industry leader for more than 10 years, Pati has volunteered at many of Illinois' premier tourism events including International Pow Wow, World Cup and the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism. She has also served on the board for the River North Association.

A graduate in Management from National-Louis University, Pati has also been very active in inner-city mentoring programs, and completed the 1989 Moscow marathon promoting world peace. She is also the proud mother of Matthew (4 months) and Ella (2 years).

To find out more about Illinois cooperative inserts and how to position your attraction, destination or hotel, please contact Pati at (773)772-0527 or pati@preprint.com.

Her address is:
1749 N. Washtenaw
Chicago, Illinois 60647

NATIONAL NEWS

Less long-distance vacations

Fewer Americans (46 percent, down from 51 percent in July 2002), are planning to take a vacation more than 75 miles from their homes, according to the Cambridge Consumer Credit Index. Nearly a quarter of them (23 percent, the same as last year), plan to charge their get-aways on credit cards. Just over two thirds of respondents (68 percent, up from 65 percent a year ago), will pay for their vacation out of checking or savings accounts, while 4 percent (up from 1 percent) will withdraw the money from an investment account and 2 percent will borrow from either family or friends. Some 1,160 people responded to the survey.
Source: Travel Advance

40 Big Macs or a night in a Chicago hotel?

A recent article published on ChicagoBusiness.com reflected that Chicago offers the most affordable hotel rooms when compared with other major U.S. cities such as New York, San Francisco and Boston. The article was based on a new report released by Jones Lang LaSalle Hotels who used *The Economist* magazine's infamous Big Mac Index to compare hotel rates to the price of a McDonald's Big Mac sandwich.

According to Jones Lang, the double-decker burgers cost \$2.65 in most large U.S. cities. Based on that figure, Jones Lang found a traveler could stay at a Chicago hotel for the cost of 39.37 Big Macs, or \$104.32 per night – far

less than in New York, where a room costs the equivalent of 65 Big Macs, or \$172.42 per night. It's also a better deal than in other metropolitan areas, including San Francisco, where rooms average \$123.36 or 46.55 Big Macs per night, and Boston, which averages \$124.23 per night or 46.88 Big Macs.

Travel for sale

The Internet is expected to account for \$96 billion in retail sales in 2003 in the U.S., of which some 30 percent will be for travel. Travel services – including airline tickets, hotels and car rentals – will account for some \$27 billion in online sales this year.
Source: Travel Advance

No rest for the weary

About half of Americans say they won't take a vacation this year. And not because of SARS and West Nile Virus or terrorist alerts. The percentage of people who said their vacation plans were influenced by: family budget – 23 percent; general economic climate – 17 percent; concern about job security – 14 percent; terrorist alerts – 12 percent; and public health threats – 11 percent.
Source: Travel Advance

Back to (less) business

Fifty-eight percent of companies are spending less on travel now than they were at this time last year, according to a survey conducted by the National Business Travel Association (NBTA). The survey also found that 31 percent of companies increased travel spending and 11 percent maintained their same spending level. NBTA's findings are somewhat different than those released last week by Runzheimer

International and the Association of Corporate Travel Executives. According to their recent survey, 40 percent of companies slashed their travel budgets in 2003, 26 percent increased travel budgets and 34 percent kept the status quo from the previous year.

Source: Travel Advance



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The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for Illinois residents.