

HIGHLIGHTS

► Upcoming industry events:

- April 21: Illinois Legislative Day, Springfield, Ill.
- April 24-28: International Pow Wow®, Los Angeles, Calif.
- May 15-16: Lewis & Clark National Signature Event, Hartford, Ill.
- June 25-July 5: Grand Excursion 2004, Rock Island, Ill., to St. Paul, Minn.

MESSAGE FROM THE STATE TRAVEL DIRECTOR



Jan Kostner

I am pleased to report that the 2004 Governor's Conference on Tourism was a great success. I hope all of you who attended found the experience both valuable and educational. For those of you who were unable to join us in Chicago, I have decided to recap my State of the State of Tourism speech in this issue.

I'd like to express my great appreciation to Governor Blagojevich for providing the opportunity for us to come together this past week, and to the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Director Jack Lavin for all the support he's given our industry over the course of the last year.

Kudos to Visit Illinois' Chairman Russ Salzman, Governor's Conference Chair Keith Arnold, and Executive Director Pat Snyder for all their efforts in making this conference a success.

I'm approaching my first anniversary with the Bureau of Tourism and it's been quite a year. Additionally, it looks like the

months to come will be equally as interesting and challenging. But I know that with everyone in Illinois working together, this year will be just as successful and rewarding as the last.

As we move forward, it is encouraging to know that we can depend on the creativity and experience, the passion and the commitment, that each of you brings to what is truly a team effort.

The next year will be a real test of our ingenuity and resilience as an industry. But we are ready. We are equipped with new partners and fresh ideas. We're getting back to what we do best – promoting Illinois as a premier tourism destination.

I assure you that the lines of communication are open, and that we will remain steadfast in representing the collective voice of Illinois tourism to ensure its continued growth. Regardless of the challenges, we are a dynamic industry. And together, we will prove that a smaller budget will not lead to a smaller vision. We will demonstrate that we, as an industry, are making no little plans for Illinois tourism.

We have a solid vision for tourism in Illinois and concrete strategies to turn goals into realities. To put it quite simply, we want to put Illinois on the national tourism map, make

(Continued on Page 2)

STATEWIDE NEWS

IBOT announces new advertising agency

Following an extensive search process and a review by Illinois tourism leaders from throughout the state, IBOT is pleased to welcome the advertising firm J. Walter Thompson to the Illinois tourism team.

Charged with spearheading efforts to tout Illinois as a premier travel destination, J. Walter Thompson wowed review participants with their vision for Illinois tourism and professional experience throughout the selection process. J. Walter Thompson is a world-renowned advertising agency that has offices in 86 countries and 150 cities. With a staff of 8,500 employees, they are the largest brand-building agency in the United States and the fourth largest in the world. They are the world's oldest advertising agency brand, having been founded in 1864.

Illinois tourism is in good company with J. Walter Thompson's clients which include Kellogg's, Ford, Kraft, Pfizer, Shell, Nestle, Merrill Lynch, Rolex and many others.

The advertising contract will continue to be managed by Jordan Engerman, IBOT's marketing manager.

Illinois' growing agritourism industry

Last month, the Agriculture Tourism Partners of Illinois linked

MESSAGE FROM THE STATE TRAVEL DIRECTOR *(Continued)*

it the number one vacation destination for Midwesterners, and make sure that our own residents get out and enjoy Illinois.

And, this year in particular, we have a national story to tell. In addition to the timeless appeal of Chicago itself, two events are worthy of national even international headlines: the opening of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and the bicentennial commemoration of the Lewis & Clark expedition.

We are also excited about our marketing partners. We are continuing our relationship with longtime vendor of more than 10 years, Edelman – the fifth largest public relations firm in the world. Through its expertise, experience and global operations, the agency will be invaluable in helping us to implement our media relations strategies and to develop new marketing alliances and partnerships to achieve maximum outreach in key markets.

their Web site, www.agritourism.uiuc.edu, to www.enjoyillinois.com. The link provides a listing of agricultural sites throughout the state that are open to visitors. The organization is a partnership between the Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois tourism industry to promote agritourism and related direct marketing activities to benefit farm operators and the travel industry.

Spring eNewsletter

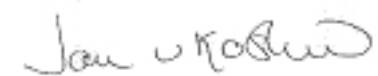
Bursting with a colorful array of activities and attractions, Illinois' spring eNewsletter was distributed to 70,000 potential visitors on

J. Walter Thompson, one of the most well-known names in advertising, as well as the first advertising agency ever, has signed on to promote Illinois tourism. The agency is working with us to create a new branding strategy that you will soon see put into action.

I have to say that in recent weeks the irony of our conference theme was not lost on many of us at IBOT or throughout the industry. And while on the surface this may not seem to be the most appropriate of themes, in light of the challenges we face, it is now more fitting than we could ever have imagined.

"Make no little plans." And we're not. We're getting tourism – one of the world's largest industries – back on track. And we're going to start right here in Illinois.

Best regards,



March 18. Features of this seasonal outreach effort included "Out and About," with highlights from Illinois' burgeoning theater and performing community; "Seasonal Showcase," a guide to Illinois' major and minor league baseball; "Great Getaways," with a feature on the upcoming commemoration of Lewis and Clark's famed Corps of Discovery expedition; and "Spotlight On," offering detailed information on Illinois' stake in the historic Grand Excursion journey. Some top events are also highlighted.

To receive IBOT's eNewsletter, contact Brad Strauss at Brad_Strauss@commerce.state.il.us

Spring on the stands

The spring issue of *Illinois Now!*, the state's free travel magazine, gives readers the scoop on the best places to celebrate the bicentennial of Lewis & Clark's voyage of discovery, advice on planning an unforgettable family reunion, and details on cozy cabins and lodges that are a sure cure for spring fever. A complete listing of the top spring festivals and events is also included.

To obtain a free copy of *Illinois Now!* or for more information on traveling throughout Illinois, call 800-2CONNECT or visit www.enjoyillinois.com. Copies of the seasonal magazine are available at tourism information centers, CVBs, regional tourism development offices, and state park lodges throughout Illinois.

Familiarization trips

Chicago's reputation as an extraordinary destination continues to travel far, as IBOT hosted three fam trips in March. British television program "The American Food Revolution" discovered how local chefs such as Charlie Trotter and Gale Gand are making a global impression. Later in the month, the BBC toured Bronzeville and its illustrious boxing past as part of a documentary on the history of boxing. Finally, Chicago was recognized by journalist Carolyn Martin, of German-Austrian magazine *Sea Life*, who researched local restaurants and bars to include in her list of the "Ten Most Exciting Cities in the World."

Also, March 23-26, the Chicago and Illinois team played host to *Dertour* and 20 top-selling tour

INDUSTRY INSIDER: LOU MENG SOL



To help you get to know who's who in Illinois tourism, ITN profiles an industry leader each month. This month, we introduce Lou Mengsol, director of sports marketing for the Greater Woodfield Convention & Visitors Bureau.

An active member of the tourism industry for more than 15 years, Lou Mengsol joined the Greater Woodfield Convention & Visitors Bureau (GWCVB) in April of 1999. The GWCVB serves 13 communities with a population of 500,000 people and 11,000 hotel rooms in Chicago's Northwest

suburbs. In his current position as director of sports marketing, Mengsol has played a pivotal role in the Bureau's hosting of major events including the National Softball Association Girls Fastpitch World Series and the Jr. National Weightlifting Championships.

Leading the Bureau's sport efforts, Mengsol is dedicated to using this niche market for the end result of stimulating the local economy by developing a sports industry presence and attracting, hosting and assisting amateur and professional sports events, and improving the overall image of the area.

The Bureau has also found great success in enhancing the quality-of-life in the area by providing a wide-range of sporting events, as well as opportunities for local youth to be participants in and spectators at sporting events.

(Continued on Page 4)

operators from Germany. With an itinerary organized by the Chicago and Illinois teams, the group spent two days in Chicago touring top attractions and visiting participating hotels for site inspections, and another two days driving Route 66 and touring Springfield.

ITB update

Chicago and Illinois once again teamed with United Airlines to host a booth at this year's Chicago International Tourism Bourse (ITB), the world's largest tourism fair, held in Berlin from March

12-17, 2004. Jan Kostner represented IBOT to the tourism community, and along with United and the Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, hosted a media breakfast that conveyed key tourism messages to more than 40 members of the German news media. Overall, the team met with more than 20 top tour operators, and airline and hotel executives during the fair. More than 10,000 exhibitors – an increase from 2003 – covering 178 countries and territories participated in the fair. The U.S. was one of the largest exhibitors, with more than 400 tradeshow booths.

2004 Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism

Thank you to everyone who attended the 2004 Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism at the Hilton Chicago March 29-31. Nearly 700 industry professionals were a part of this year's conference and participated in a variety of educational sessions and social events. Attendees heard keynote sessions by industry experts, Peter Yesawich and Ed Barlow, and had the opportunity to earn accreditation from the American Bus Association, National Tour Association, and the International Council of Convention & Visitors Bureaus.

Special thanks to the partners who helped organize the conference, particularly Visit Illinois, Edelman and the Hilton Chicago. And thank you also to Marge Heissing and her team for organizing the silent auction, and to Bonnie Heimbach, Char Scamihorn, Bob Lukens, Keith Arnold, Dale Hazlewood, Jennifer Mateus and Tami Brodnicki for organizing the Governor's Awards program.

In keeping with tradition, the conference ended with the Governor's Tourism Awards for outstanding marketing programs and achievements. A list of award winners is below and on page five.

Congratulations to all participants and to the winners of the 2004 Governor's Tourism Awards.

COMMUNITY LEADERS

Legislative Friend of Tourism
Representative Steve Davis,
111th District

INDUSTRY INSIDER: LOU MENG SOL (Continued)

Currently serving a fourth consecutive term as a board member of Sports Illinois, a subcommittee of the Illinois Council of Convention and Visitor Bureaus, Mengsol attributes Chris Davenport, formerly of the Rockford CVB, for his interest in sports marketing. Davenport had included him in Rockford's plans to start a focused sports marketing effort, and from there he encountered Maureen Riedy, formerly of GWCVB and now the president of Lake County CVB, and the rest is history.

Mengsol received his associate's degree in travel and tourism management from Bryant & Stratton College located in Milwaukee. He has also received the prestigious *Certified Sports Event Executive* (CSEE) designation and will receive his Sports Marketing Professional (SMP) designation from the University of Kentucky's Sports Marketing Academy this May. Mengsol will be the first person in the country to hold both designations, CSEE and SMP.

Practicing what he preaches, he enjoys fishing and turkey hunting in his spare time. He also enjoys playing computer games with friends over the Internet and has attended the National Game Convention for more than 20 years. He was also an Illinois delegate at the 2002 USA Weightlifting Board of Governor's meeting, and a member of the USA Track and Field team, as well as a member of the two-man rifle team participating at the national championships.

Mengsol is married to Catherine and has four happy children, Christopher, Jennifer, Matthew and Chelsea.

To find out more about the GWCVB and its sports program, contact Mengsol at:

Greater Woodfield Convention & Visitors Bureau
1430 North Meacham Road,
Suite 1400
Schaumburg, Illinois 60173-4808
(847)490-1010
lbm@chicagonorthwest.com

Individual Friend of Tourism

Scott Lawlor - Galena Cellars
Vineyard and Winery, Galena

Corporate Friend of Tourism (TIE)

- Country Insurance and Financial Services, Bloomington-Normal
- Archer Daniels Midland, Decatur

Media Friend of Tourism

Midwest Suburban

Publishing, Suburban Cook County

Peer's Choice

Rockford Area CVB
Tourism Economic Impact Campaign: Tourism Means Jobs.

Best of Show Award

Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project: Promotional Campaign featuring their commemorative license plates.

**GENERAL ADVERTISING
AND PROMOTION****Logo Design**Division A

Seminary Street Historic Commercial District/Merchant's Association, Galesburg

Division B

Quad Cities CVB

Newspaper AdvertisingDivision B Only

Galena/Jo Daviess County CVB

Magazine AdvertisingDivision A

Seminary Street Historic Commercial District/Merchant's Association, Galesburg

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County CVB

Best PostersDivision A

Streator Tourism

Division B

Aurora Area CVB

Billboard AdvertisingDivision A Only

Seminary Street Historic Commercial District/Merchant's Association, Galena

General BrochureDivision A

Stoney Creek Inn, Galena

Division B

The Irish Cottage and Frank O'Doud's Irish Pub, Galena

Booklets, Area Guides and Meeting GuidesDivision A

Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center, Utica

Division B

Illinois Grape and Wine Resource Council

NewslettersDivision B Only

The Tourism Bureau Southwestern Illinois

Visitor Guides with AdvertisingDivision A

Galesburg Area CVB

Division B

Alton Regional CVB

Visitor Guides without AdvertisingDivision A

Kankakee County CVB

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County CVB

Premium ItemsDivision A

Ottawa Visitors Center

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County CVB

Web sitesDivision A

Geneva Chamber of Commerce

Division B

Lisle CVB

E-MarketingDivision B Only

City of Chicago-Office of Tourism

Radio AdvertisingDivision A

Geneva Chamber of Commerce

Division B

Aurora Area CVB

Television AdvertisingDivision A Only

Landmark Café & Creperie, Galesburg

Documentary/Travel-LogDivision A

Dreaming Tree Films in collaboration with Chicago's North Shore CVB

Division B

The Tourism Bureau Southwestern Illinois

CD-RomDivision A

Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center, Utica

Division B

Champaign County CVB

ResearchDivision B

Galena/Jo Daviess County CVB

Advertising and/or PR Campaign Single MediaDivision A

Seminary Street Historic Commercial District/Merchant's Association, Galesburg

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County CVB

Advertising and/or PR Campaign Multi-MediaDivision A

Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project

Division B

Aurora Area CVB

Citywide Promotional CampaignsDivision A

Canal Corridor Association

Division B

Galena/Jo Daviess County CVB

HOSPITALITY ORGANIZATIONS**Hotels/Motels**Division A

Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center, Utica

Division B

Pheasant Run Resort and Spa, St. Charles

Bed & Breakfasts

Goldmoor Inn, Galena

Restaurant Marketing

Greater Woodfield CVB, The "Original" Chef's Fest

Attractions With Best General Promotion

Pheasant Run Resort and Spa, St. Charles

Attractions With Special Promotion

Galena Cellars Vineyard and Winery, Galena

NATIONAL NEWS

Survey shows strong support for tough anti-terrorism measures

The overwhelming majority of Americans continue to support tough, even tougher, surveillance measures to prevent terrorist attacks. Furthermore, the Bush administration gets high marks for what it has done to prevent new terrorist attacks in the U.S. Only relatively few people feel that their privacy has been threatened, according to a nationwide Harris Poll of 1,020 adults surveyed by Harris Interactive in mid-February.

Source: *Travel Advance*

Increase in Internet travel planning

The 2003 National Leisure Travel Monitor, a study by travel industry consulting firms Yesawich, Pepperdine, Brown & Russell and Yankelovich Partners, notes a significant decline in the use of travel agents and an increase in the use of the Internet. Nearly 40 percent of leisure travelers now use the Internet for making reservations, the study says. But the key, experts say, is knowing when to use a travel agent and when to use the Net.

Source: *Travel Advance*

U.S. tourism sales hit highest level in three years

Sales in the recovering U.S. tourism industry edged higher in the fourth quarter of 2003 and hit their highest level since 2000 in

the year as a whole. Total 2003 sales climbed 3.5 percent to \$722.1 billion, the highest since \$737.2 billion in 2002, a report by the U.S. Commerce Department, Office of Travel & Tourism Industries showed. Sales for 2002 were \$697.8 billion. Tourism sales in the final quarter of 2003 rose an annualized 2.2 percent pace to \$740.6 billion.

Source: *Travel Advance*

TIA index shows consumers confident about travel

Another sign of the travel industry's continued recovery is the sharp increase in the Travel Industry Association's Travel Sentiment Index for the first quarter of 2004. The overall index now stands at 102.2, a nearly 9 percent increase over last quarter. The jump is primarily attributed to travelers' increased positive feelings about having enough money and time to take pleasure trips. Also, travelers currently feel that travel is more affordable than it was a year ago.

Source: *Travel Advance*

Boomer wanderlust a boon for RV makers

Sales of recreational vehicles are soaring thanks to interest rates at historic lows, attractive new features and more leisure time for many people, including baby boomers. Last year was the best ever for the industry, which expects an even better 2004. The industry also has demographics on its side as wanderlust-inspired boomers respond to a marketing campaign targeting consumers who haven't yet reached retirement age. Also driving RV sales are the hassles of air travel and fears of traveling abroad – both outgrowths of 9/11. Better-

equipped vehicles are also a huge draw.

Source: *Travel Advance*

ILLINOIS
RIGHT HERE. RIGHT NOW.™

Rod R. Blagojevich
Governor

Patrick Quinn
Lieutenant Governor

Jack Lavin
Director, Illinois Department of
Commerce and Economic
Opportunity

Jan Kostner
Deputy Director, Illinois Department
of Commerce and Economic
Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism

Lisa Link
Public Relations Manager, Illinois
Department of Commerce and
Economic Opportunity, Bureau of
Tourism

Published monthly by the Illinois Department of
Commerce and Economic Opportunity,
Bureau of Tourism
100 West Randolph Street, Suite 3-400
Chicago, IL 60601
Phone: 312/814-4733
FAX: 312/814-6175

Where no TTY number is listed in this or other
DCEO, Bureau of Tourism publications, the
hearing impaired may use the state TTY relay:
217/785-6055

If you would like to be added or removed from our
distribution list, please contact Lisa Link at the
numbers listed above or at
Lisa_Link@commerce.state.il.us.



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.