Blackhawk Waterways Convention & Visitor's Bureau
Promoting Tourism in Carroll, Lee, Ogle and Whiteside Counties
Diane Bausman, Executive Director
Report for Month of September 2011

Meetings Attended:

- Aug 31 – Regional Economic Dev. Meeting
- Sept 7th – Savanna Hotel/Motel meeting
- Sept 8th – Reagan Commission meeting
- Sept 8th – Rock Falls Tourism meeting
- Sept 12 – Dixon Tourism meeting
- Sept 13th – Carroll County Hotel/Motel meeting
- Sept 19th – meeting with Dixon Main Street
- Sept 22 – Tri State Tourism meeting
- Sept 27th – BWCVB Board meeting
- Sept 28th – Rochelle Tourism meeting

Web Site Update:

- We had 3,715 unique visitors to the website in the last month which is a 6.4% increase over the previous month. These visitors viewed an average of 3.48 pages. 84.03% came via search engines (Google was #1); 9.33% came via referring sites (Facebook was #1) and 6.64% was direct traffic. The rotating Adwords landing pages sent 1,600 visitors to our site which is also an increase and these resulted in 96 click-thrus to information on accommodations and 62 click thrus to information on attractions.
- The Trail of Terror website traffic has increased 427% in the last month with 46.15% coming via referring sites (Facebook was #1); 37.18% via search engines (Google was #1) and 16.67% was direct traffic from people typing in trail-of-terror.com.

Mailing Update:

- During Sept. we sent out 275 packets of information as a result of requests off the website, phone calls & Midwest Living.
- We have sent out 255 TOT brochures as the result of requests off the website.
- The final Spring-Summer Illinois Getaway Guide leads came in last week and we sent out a total of 4,212 packets and had 3,629 people download our e-brochure making a total of 7,831 requests as a result of our ad.

Advertising/Public Relations:

- Aug 30th – WCCI radio show
- Sept 21st – WCCI radio show
- Print advertising was done in the Autumn on Parade paper, the Aug-Sept issue of Northwest Quarterly and the Freeport Journal Standard Fall Trail
- Web advertising is ongoing on the WGN TV Cruisin' Illinois website.
- Our Fall promotion Facebook advertising promoting fall activities in our region launched Tuesday Sept 20th and as of Sept 30th we had 358,449 impressions (this is the total # of times the ad has been shown on FB) and we've had 329 direct click throughs to the website.

Updates/Information/Reminders:

- The 2012 VG planning is moving along. The cover concept has been selected and we are in the process of updating our database to make sure we have the latest information. The advertising solicitation letters will be going out soon and Jim Griffith, our ad rep for TDG will be in the area in mid-October. We are still planning on a mid-January 2012 delivery date.
- Our consumer e-newsletter went out last week and our tourism partner newsletter went out Oct 3rd.
- State Funding – I received an e-mail from the Illinois Office of Tourism stating they are in the final stages of executing the FY 12 LTCB grant and we should be receiving our 1st payment soon.
- Mark the date – The 2012 Governor's Conference on Tourism has been set for March 14-16. It will again be at the Donald Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont. More details will be coming soon.

Blackhawk Waterways CVB Mission Statement
To increase the economic impact to the four counties represented through promotions, advertising and providing information to potential visitors.