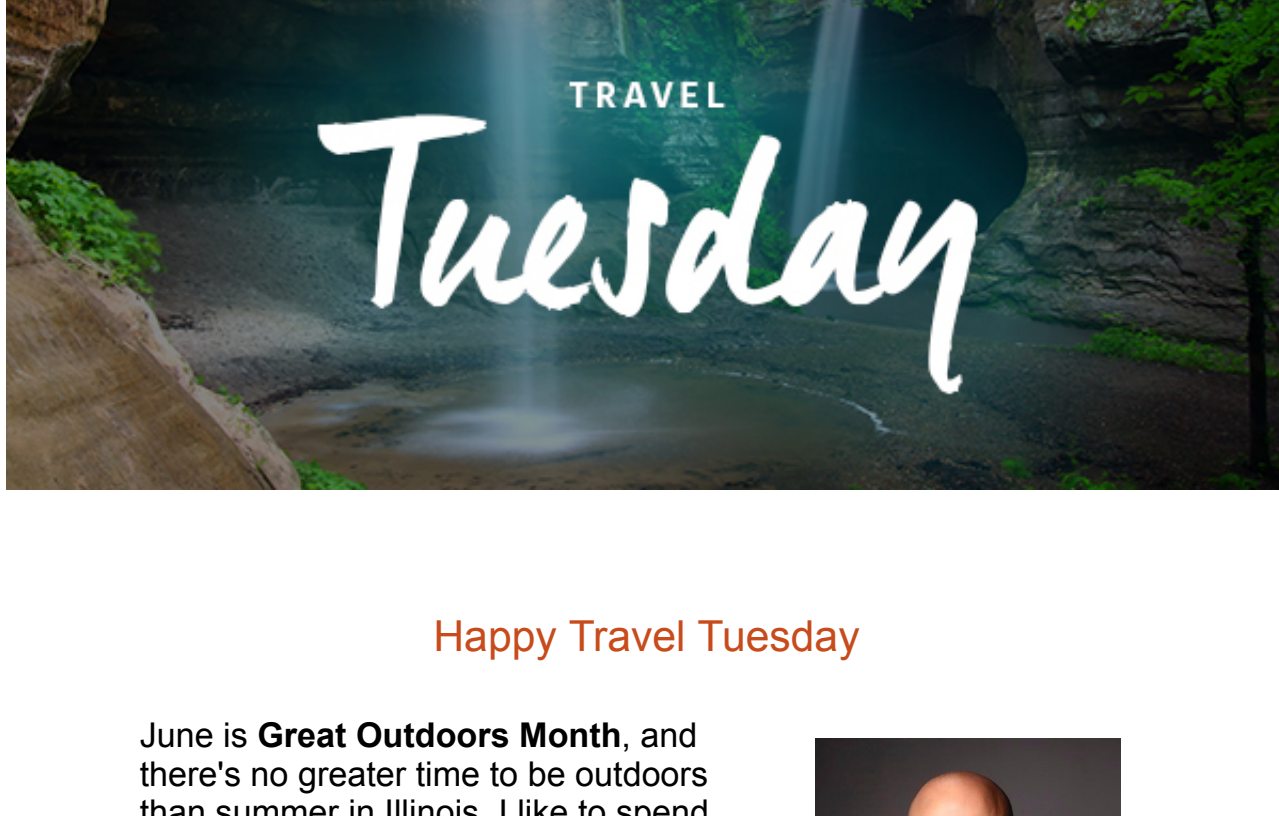


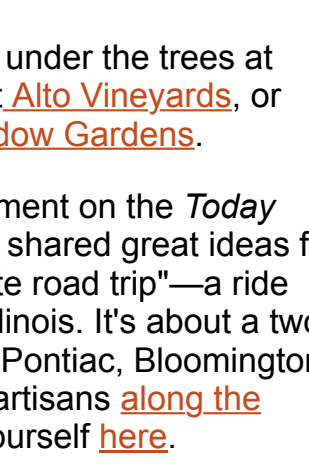


Explore the Great Outdoors, use up those vacation days, and see new art installations springing up in our gardens. #EnjoyIllinois

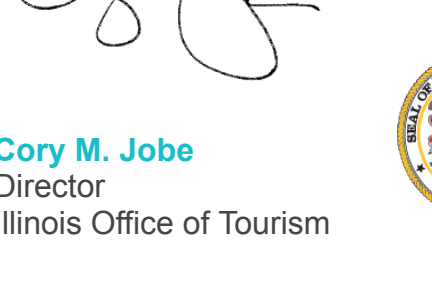


## Happy Travel Tuesday

June is **Great Outdoors Month**, and there's no greater time to be outdoors than summer in Illinois. I like to spend time at the state's outdoor treasures, from hiking in the Garden of the Gods to canoeing in the Cache River. I know you all love to travel, so I encourage everyone to hop in a convertible and take a scenic drive down the [Great River Road](#). You could also celebrate Great Outdoors Month with many of our Illinois Made makers, whether it's dining under the trees at [Prairie Fruits Farms](#), sipping chilled wines at [Alto Vineyards](#), or walking among rows of planters at [Longshadow Gardens](#).



I was proud to see Illinois featured on a segment on the *Today* show on June 8. Travel expert **Misty Belles** shared great ideas for your summer vacation, including the "ultimate road trip"—a ride down Route 66, which begins right here in Illinois. It's about a two-day trip from Chicago to Alton, with stops in Pontiac, Bloomington, and Springfield (with plenty of Illinois Made artisans [along the way](#)). You can see the *Today* segment for yourself [here](#).



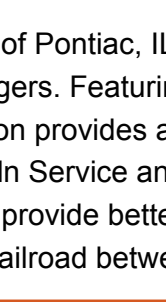
Thank you to WBBM Newsradio in Chicago for having me on their *At Issue* program on Sunday. During a delightful 30-minute conversation, we chatted about all the exciting things happening in Illinois, including our expansion of Illinois Made, our new **We See**

**Amazing in Everyone** campaign, and upcoming Pride Month festivities. I owe a special thanks to **Graham Thompson** of **Optimo Hats** for joining me. Listen to the segment [here](#).

Your friend in Illinois tourism,



**Cory M. Jobe**  
Director  
Illinois Office of Tourism



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
OFFICE OF TOURISM  
Bruce Rauner, Governor

### TRAVEL ILLINOIS

## ILLINOIS SPOTLIGHT

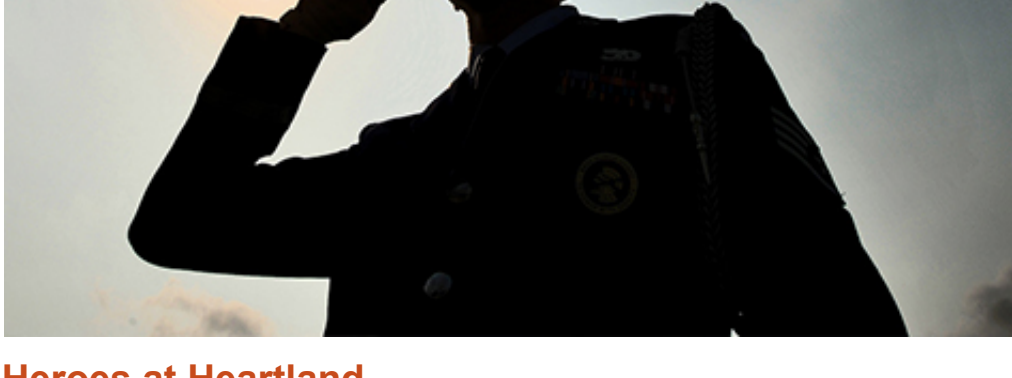
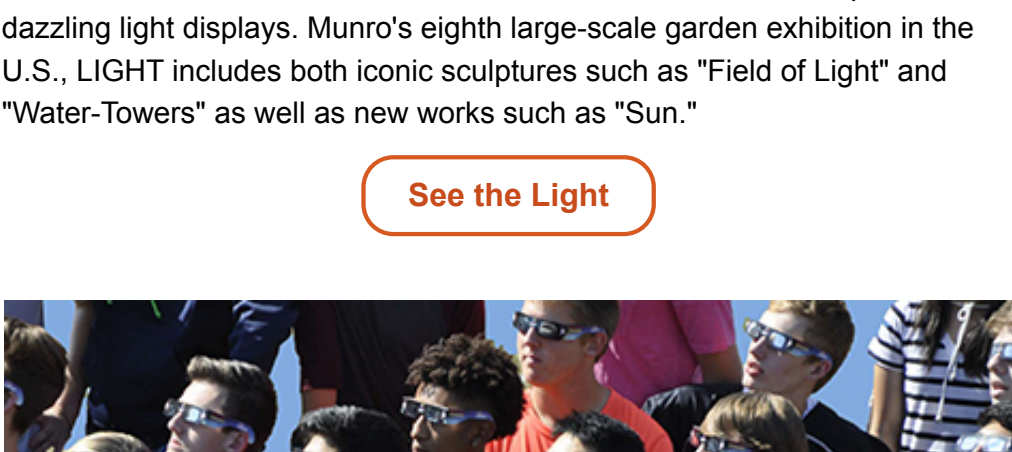


Photo: Kevin Barlow, The Pantagraph

### New Passenger Rail Station in Downtown Pontiac

On Tuesday, June 6, the town of Pontiac, IL unveiled a new 1,350-square-foot station for Amtrak passengers. Featuring a peaked roof, glass façade, and modern facilities, the station provides a comfortable terminus for passengers on Amtrak's Lincoln Service and Texas Eagle routes—all as part of the Illinois' ongoing effort to provide better performance and higher speeds on the Union Pacific Railroad between Chicago and St. Louis.

[Get Around Illinois via Amtrak](#)



### Heroes at Heartland

Communities throughout Illinois are always looking for ways to honor our region's veterans and active-duty military personnel. To that end, the Quincy area recently announced a new event to honor veterans on Saturday, August 5, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Featuring a free day of outdoor activities, including trap shooting, archery, and a barbecue lunch, the event also seeks to raise money to support two local groups dedicated to servicing veterans. Any veterans who wish to take part in the event can sign up at the Heroes at Heartland website [here](#).

[Read More About the Event](#)

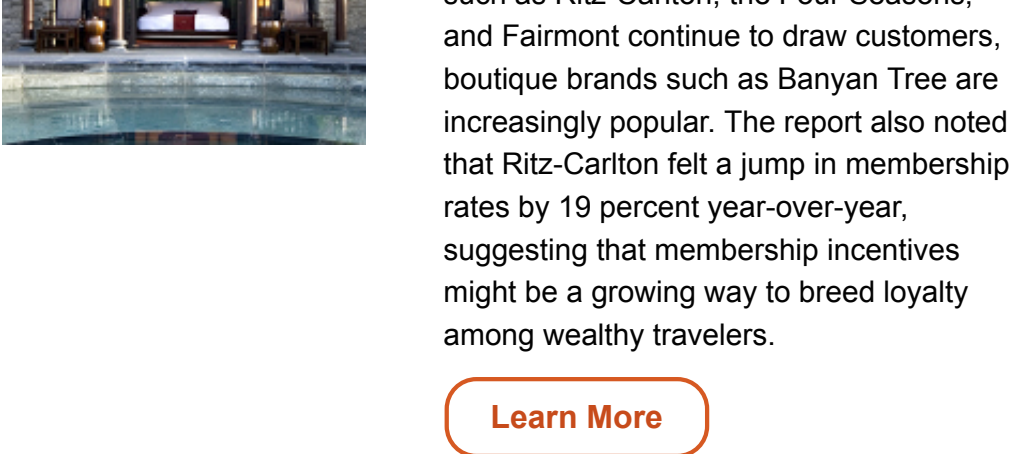


Photo: Mark Pickthall © Bruce Munro

### Bruce Munro: LIGHT

For English artist Bruce Munro, light is the medium of choice. So what, then, is his canvas? From June 3 through November 5, at least, it's the natural landscape of [Nicholas Conservatory & Gardens](#) in Rockford, where Munro's latest installation, **LIGHT**, illuminates the flower beds, trees, and ponds with dazzling light displays. Munro's eighth large-scale garden exhibition in the U.S., **LIGHT** includes both iconic sculptures such as "Field of Light" and "Water-Towers" as well as new works such as "Sun."

[See the Light](#)



### Southern Illinois Featured on TravelChannel.com

Southern Illinois received a shout-out in Travel Channel Online's recent article about the best places to watch the upcoming total eclipse on August 21. If you haven't heard, the tip of Illinois lies right in the eclipse's path of totality, meaning many of the southern towns—including Makanda, Alto Pass, and Carbondale—will see the eclipse for longer than almost any other part of the country. You can read the feature below, or [read more about the eclipse on EnjoyIllinois.com](#).

[Read the Feature](#)

## ARE YOU UP FOR RELAXING?



### Project: Time Off

As the American economy continues to grow, a growing number of American workers face one of life's most difficult choices: whether to take that much-needed vacation. The Project: Time Off Coalition is a broad-based group of organizations that strives to convince American workers to take advantage of their vacation days—a mission intended to both boost tourism throughout the country and make Americans rethink work culture to improve their health, happiness, and career satisfaction.

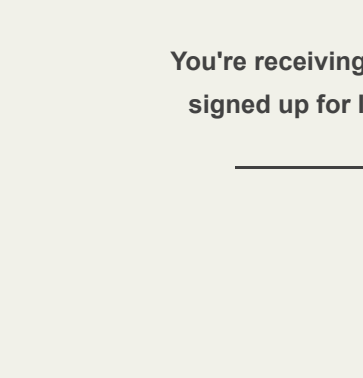
After vacation usage saw a rapid decline starting in 2000, the last few years have finally seen an uptick. In 2016, Americans took 16.8 vacation days on average—an increase of 0.6 days from the year before. Still, Americans left 662 million vacation days unused. If employees could be convinced to take that time off, it would amount to \$236 billion in additional spending, and create new jobs (and new vacation days) for 1.8 million Americans.

I'll occasionally be using this section of *Travel Tuesday* to highlight new initiatives, statistics, and takeaways from PTO's ongoing work. Hopefully we can all work together to encourage Americans to take a break, already.

[Read More About Project: Time Off](#)

### THE LATEST TRAVEL TRENDS

## NEWS YOU CAN USE



### Boutique Hotels Hot in China

According to [new research](#), boutique hotels have been growing in favor among Chinese luxury travelers. Though chains such as Ritz-Carlton, the Four Seasons, and Fairmont continue to draw customers, boutique brands such as Banyan Tree are increasingly popular. The report also noted that Ritz-Carlton felt a jump in membership rates by 19 percent year-over-year, suggesting that membership incentives might be a growing way to breed loyalty among wealthy travelers.

[Learn More](#)



### New iPhone Features

Last week, Apple [announced](#) its new features for iOS 11, many of which are relevant to the travel industry. Among them: a retooled language-translation tool for Siri, which converts phrases into a more expressive, human-sounding voice. Other features include detailed floor plans of 30 airport terminals in Apple Maps, a redesigned web browser that more intelligently tracks users' interests (including possible destinations), and Apple Watch integration with third-party apps such as JetBlue.

[Learn More](#)

## GUIDED TOURS OF STARVED ROCK



Starting in June, the [Starved Rock State Park's Visitor Center](#) offers outdoor adventurers a introduction to the park's breathtaking gorges, waterfalls, and trails via its Visit a Canyon Tour. Starting with a historic trolley ride, the tour includes a guided, 45-minute walk to Council Overhang or Ottawa Canyon—both offering views of the natural wonders to be found in Illinois.

[Book Your Tour](#)

## #ENJOYILLINOIS



Check out how people from all over the world **#EnjoyIllinois** every day on our [Instagram](#)

Oh, and don't forget...

We're excited to hear about what you have going on! Send your releases to [news@enjoyillinois.com](mailto:news@enjoyillinois.com) and social media campaigns you're launching to [social@enjoyillinois.com](mailto:social@enjoyillinois.com). We can't guarantee that all events submitted will be featured, but we always love hearing about what's going on in your area, so keep sending your information!

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