



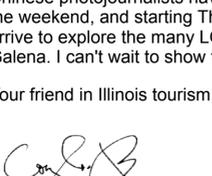
TRAVEL
Tuesday

Happy Travel Tuesday

What a week. I spent my **National Travel & Tourism Week (NTTW)** visiting Convention & Visitor Bureaus throughout Illinois, feeling energized thanks to the exciting statewide tourism numbers I shared with you in my last letter. I wish I could have sent you a postcard from my trip, but this week's Travel Tuesday will have to do.



At each stop along my tour, I had the pleasure of announcing several new makers and artisans who've been inducted into the *Illinois Made* program: **Cocoa Blue Chocolates** and **Maldaner's** in Springfield, **The Great Pumpkin Patch** in Arthur, and **Jonamac Orchard** in Malta. They join the outstanding lineup of independent artisans, restaurants, and local gems peppered throughout Illinois. If you ever want to visit some of them (and why wouldn't you?), we've put together four custom *Illinois Made* itineraries, which you can [download on the Enjoy Illinois website](#).



Good thing I remembered to pack my suit, because I spent much of my time in front of our local cameras. Even if I did have to get up early, it was my honor to appear on **Paula Sands Live** on the Quad Cities' local NBC affiliate (KWQC-TV) on May 8 and **Newschannel 20 Sunrise** on WICS-TV in Springfield on May 10. Thank you to all the radio and TV affiliates throughout Illinois who helped me spread the great news happening in Illinois tourism.

Yesterday, I met with the **Illinois Council of Convention & Visitor Bureaus** in Starved Rock for their Spring Membership Conference. Over the rest of this week, Illinois welcomes some of our international friends during a pair of exciting FAMs. A group of Chinese photojournalists have been cruising along Route 66 since the weekend, and starting Thursday, nine international writers will arrive to explore the many LGBTQ-related activities in Chicago and Galena. I can't wait to show them the sights.

Your friend in Illinois tourism,

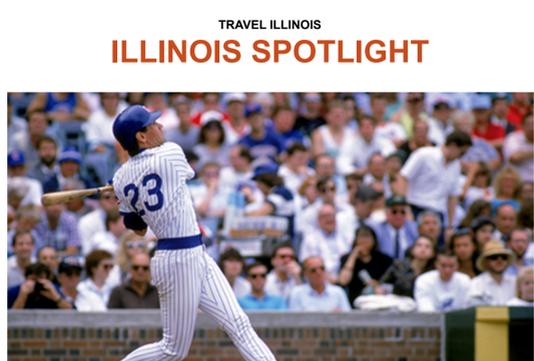
Cory M. Jobe

Cory M. Jobe
Director
Illinois Office of Tourism



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

Highlights from Our May 8 Press Conference:



TRAVEL ILLINOIS

ILLINOIS SPOTLIGHT



Inside the Illinois Sports Huddle

On May 8-9, Sports Illinois held the Sports Huddle in the Quad Cities. Hosted by the Quad Cities CVB with the participation of 18 CVBs, the conference included sports planners from various organizations—with guest speakers such as Cubs legend Ryne Sandberg—as they convened to discuss the ways sporting events can help drive tourism in Illinois. As a result of the conference, 95% of attendees surveyed said they anticipate having an event that's new or retained in Illinois within two years, a promising sign for the future of sports tourism in our state.

[Hear Cory on WVIK Public Radio](#)



Smell the Lilacs

It's (finally) spring in Illinois. The **Lilac Time festival** in Lombard closes out its two-week celebration with plenty of events. Along with wine tastings, heritage concerts, and a park featuring 700 lilacs and 25,000 tulips, the festival offers free classes on topics such as how to grow the right plants to attract butterflies in your backyard.

[Enjoy the Blooms](#)



A Nostalgic Night in Effingham

One of the joys of Illinois' small towns are all the nostalgic Cruise Nights happening throughout the summer. On Friday, May 19, Effingham kicks off the season with a downtown festival filled with live music, great food, and plenty of cruisin'. Jefferson Ave opens in both directions for cars and bikes to cruise while people mill about the sidewalks or hang out in the beer garden.

[Join the Party](#)



Four Score and 70 Years Ago

On Saturday and Sunday, May 20-21, Naper Settlement revisits one of our nation's most turbulent periods during its annual **Civil War Days** festival. The family-friendly activities include historical figures you can interact with, plenty of food, and vendors selling historical reproductions. At 2:30 p.m. each day, hundreds of re-enactors fire cannons and march into a demonstration of the war's intense battles.

[Buy Tickets Here](#)

ARE YOU UP FOR LOCAL SPIRITS?



Heart-Cut Whiskey in the Heart of Chicago

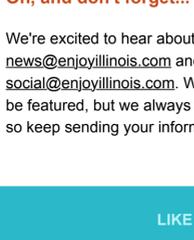
Master distiller Robert Birnecker and his wife, Sonat, both left their academic careers behind to found this distillery in the heart of Chicago, but they didn't completely abandon their roots. Robert's Austrian family has been distilling spirits for three generations—a heritage that inspired him to craft organic grain-to-bottle whisk, liqueurs, and specialty spirits made from regionally grown oat, rye, and millet. By avoiding the common industry practice of purchasing premade spirits, **Koval Distillery** supports the local economy and sustainable agriculture, making it a business that exemplifies *Illinois Made*.

Despite the intensely local focus, Koval has made quite a splash in the international whiskey scene. Koval's spirits have won gold medals on both sides of the Atlantic, and distribution now reaches about 25 states as well as Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Japan, Canada, and Australia. The international acclaim may only rise, too, as *Whisky Magazine* recently named Koval one of the top 100 distilleries to visit on the planet.

[Check out your Illinois Makers](#)

THE LATEST TRAVEL TRENDS

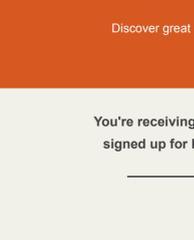
NEWS YOU CAN USE



Millennials Love Cruises?

We all know Millennials are a tough demographic. In recent years, however, cruise lines and travel agencies have made a dedicated push to Millennials, and it seems to have paid off: **32%** of Millennials surveyed **reported taking a cruise** in the last five years—compared to 18% of Baby Boomers—and 90% of them said they had a good time. The takeaway: Millennials are a massive tourism market who want to have fun. All you have to do is show them where.

[Learn More](#)



New Amazon Echo Screens

When it comes to booking accommodations online, customers typically rely on visuals to make their decisions. That may make for a coming revolution in voice-operated devices such as Amazon Echo and Google Home. **According to Skift**, the 7-inch screen on the new Echo Show allows users to see more results when searching for hotels, which should boost customer confidence and inspire more bookings.

[Learn More](#)

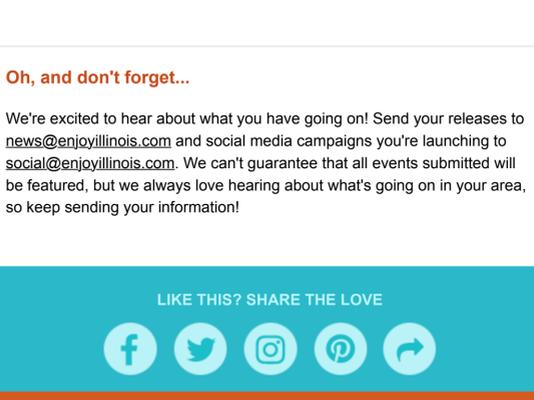
A MULTICULTURAL PARTY IN SKOKIE



May 20-21 marks the 27th Annual **Skokie Festival of Cultures**. With dozens of cultural displays, two stages of ethnic dance and music, and a variety of international food and games, the festival celebrates the rich diversity found in Skokie and many other communities in Illinois. For even more of a cultural tapestry, Friday evening features a free screening of several international short films, including some award winners.

[Celebrate Illinois' Diverse Cultures](#)

#ENJOYILLINOIS

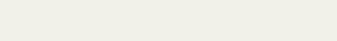


Check out how people from all over the world **#EnjoyIllinois** every day on our [Instagram](#)

Oh, and don't forget...

We're excited to hear about what you have going on! Send your releases to news@enjoyillinois.com and social media campaigns you're launching to 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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