

### Summer = Festival Season

By Don Welch - President/CEO

Summer is half over and The Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau has been extremely busy the last few months. Our group of motivated and excited staff makes it easy to seem as if it is flying by.

In May, we hosted the inaugural Mardi Gras in May 5K and Street Festival on the Peoria Riverfront. Water Street felt like Bourbon Street, with great food, music and entertainers. The one thing that I was extremely pleased to see was the amount of people enjoying themselves up and down the street and populating our Riverfront establishments.

This is one of my favorite times of the year as there are festivals and events happening almost every weekend in the Peoria Area. Some have had a long running tradition, such as Washington's Good Neighbor Days, the "Red, White and BOOM!" fireworks show on the Fourth of July and Summer Camp at Three Sisters Park. Others are new and exciting, showcasing the growth that is happening here. Pekin's Craft Soda Festival is one that comes to mind. People flocked to Pekin's Riverfront and enjoyed a multitude of tasty sodas, entertainment and food.

As Summer soon turns to Fall, there are still a number of upcoming events to enjoy. Morton's Pumpkin Festival is an annual tradition not just for people in Morton, but visitors from around the Midwest. Expect this year to be bigger and better as the event continues to grow. Pekin's Marigold Festival is another one you won't want to miss, the craft fair being one of the largest in the area. The Illinois Blues and Heritage Festival takes a long running music festival and adds new flair. This will be one you don't want to miss. If you want to see what events are coming up, you can check out our amazing calendar of events at [EnjoyPeoria.com](http://EnjoyPeoria.com). The great weather will be replaced with winter's cold sting soon, so take advantage of these events while you can!

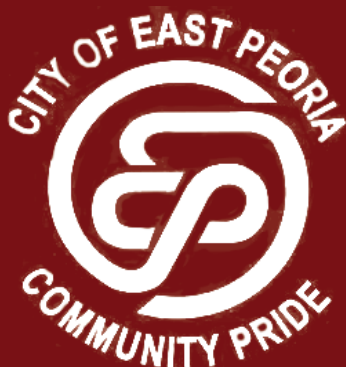
What is great about these festivals, old or new, our community is always eager to come out and enjoy themselves. It is the unity that warms my heart.

Now, let me not fail to mention the ongoing hard work of our Sales and Servicing Staff here at the Bureau. As always, we are hard at work with our partners and the IESA and IHSA to make sure that our area continues to grow as a youth sports mecca. Our team booked and/or serviced 24 events just in the last three months. Groups such as Hearts at Home, The 2016 United Methodist Church Illinois Great Rivers Annual Conference, IHSA Softball and Baseball, IESA Track and Field, The 2016 Stroke Summit, ICAT and Markiewicz were just a few we were honored to welcome to our communities.

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Don Welch  
President/CEO



### From the Mayor

**"East Peoria greatly appreciates the dedication and perseverance of the Peoria Area Visitor and Convention Bureau that bring thousands upon thousands of visitors to Central Illinois each year!"**

**Dave Mingus  
Mayor of East Peoria**







You can add soccer to the long list of IHSA and IESA State Final events in the Peoria Area. The IHSA announced that EastSide Centre in East Peoria will be the new home for the Class 1A Boys Soccer State Finals in 2017 (through 2021). "We are very excited to host the 1A boys soccer tournament at EastSide," said EastSide Director Doug McCarty. "We have had a great history with the IHSA in hosting the softball state finals since 2001 and look forward to continuing that partnership into the future by adding soccer."



## Let the Good Times Roll!



If you were walking down Water Street on May 14, you may have thought you were in New Orleans. Water Street transformed into Bourbon Street for the inaugural Mardi Gras in May Street Festival. Street performers from around the world wowed and shocked passer bys with their amazing, hilaruous and risque feats. People enjoyed great music and authentic cajun food from local restaurants. Runners raced down the riverfront at the Mardi Gras in May 5K. Volunteers passed out beads to runners at certian spots on the course, making runners feel like they were in a parade. The PACVB was very excited to see the first Mardi Gras May be a huge success!

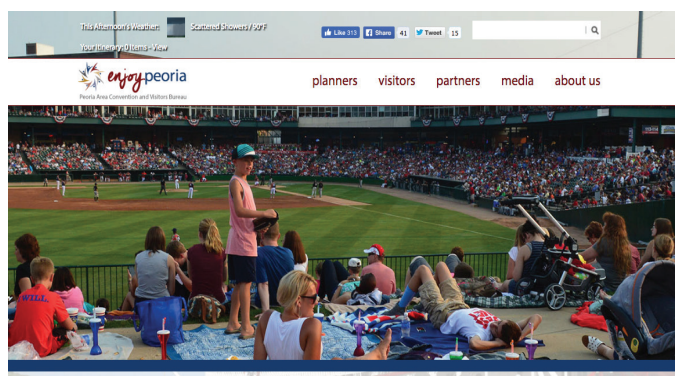




On June 28, PACVB staff and partners traveled to the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign to talk to staff, faculty and administrators regarding their events, meetings and conferences for the next few years. The goal was to show them what the Peoria Area has to offer and convince them to have their events here. Our group collectively walked 21+ miles, delivering information about the Peoria Area, individual information from participating hotels, business cards and area/hotel swag. We gave out Over 150 Enjoy Peoria bags and 175 business cards. We thank our hotel friends who took time out of the day to promote our area!



## Groups Booked/Service in 2nd Quarter



**Page Views: 240,579**

**Visits: 115,524**

**Return Visits: 28,798**

### Top Ten Visited Pages:

1. Events	6. Dining
2. Event Details	7. Hearts at Home
3. Meetings	8. Accommodations
4. Attractions	9. Discounts
5. Sips N' Bites	10. Visitors

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# SIPS AND BITES TOUR

[Click here for more!](#)



CHECK OUT OUR VIDEOS

## TOURIN' THE TOWN



### TOURIN' THE TOWN

Want to know fun things to do in YOUR neck of the woods? Follow us across the Peoria Area as we tour the town!



Washington



Eastport Marina

### VIDEO CAMPAIGN

The PACVB video campaign continues in full force. This includes a new recruitment video for University of Illinois College of Medicine Peoria. Our tourism commercial also played on American Airline flights, as well as through Champaign, Springfield and the Chicago South Suburbs



UICOMP



Tourism Commercial

(Click on the thumbnails to watch the videos!)

Want to know what's going on this weekend?



EnjoyPeoria.com  
Calendar  
of Events

Your go-to for  
Peoria Area events!



[Click here for more!](#)



## OUR MISSION...

is to promote the Peoria Area as a destination for visitors and to contribute to the economic growth of the communities we represent.

## PACVB STAFF

**Don Welch**, *President & CEO*

**Gail Hedrick**, *VP of Finance & Admin.*

**Melissa Cavanaugh**, *Finance & Admin. Coordinator*

**Cory Hatfield**, *Director of Sales*

**Joni Staley**, *Senior Convention Sales Manager*

**Karyn Anderson**, *Partnership & Ad Sales Manager*

**Laura Tafoya**, *Convention Sales Manager*

**Veronica Poehlman**, *Sales Coordinator*

**Cara Allen**, *Director of Marketing*

**Heather Soviar**, *Creative Media Manager*

**Kaci Osborne**, *Community Development Manager*

**Kim McKune**, *Convention Services Manager*

**Trianna Stark**, *Sports Services Manager*

**Andrew Barra**, *Marketing Coordinator*

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**Ms. Cori Rutherford**, *PAR-A-DICE Hotel Casino*

**Mr. Christopher Setti**, *City of Peoria*

**Mrs. Sherrill West**, *City of Washington*

## Thank You!

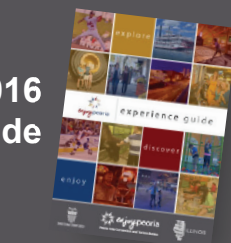
The PACVB's Mobile Visitors Center acts as our "office outside the office". Showcasing the Peoria area to our clients, visitors and residents alike, the Mobile Visitors Center can be found at festivals, community events, conferences and sporting events held within our region. Behind the wheel you can find some of the most courteous, accommodating, kind-hearted people in the Peoria area. Our drivers are always there to help with a friendly smile, and we thank them for all of their hard work and dedication! If you see them out and about with the Mobile Visitors Center, please say hello!



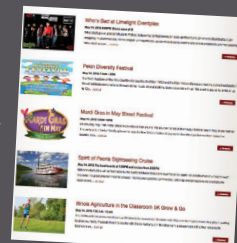
Click to view our 2016  
Experience Guide



Click for our  
bi-monthly newsletter



Check out our  
Calendar of Events!



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# THE OFFICIAL SOURCE FOR SUMMER FUN!



Check out our event  
calendar for the  
latest event information!

Take a guided park tour!

Let the kids be kids!

All aboard the Spirit of Peoria!

Catch a game at the ballpark!

Check out the big wheels!

 **enjoy peoria**.com

Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau



**"If we build a place where people want to visit,  
We will build a place where people want to live.  
If we build a place where people want to live,  
We will build a place where people want to work.  
If we build a place where people want to work,  
We will build a place where business has to be.  
If we build a place where business has to be,  
We'll be back to building a place  
that people have to visit.  
It all starts with a visit,  
and a visit doesn't happen without us."**