

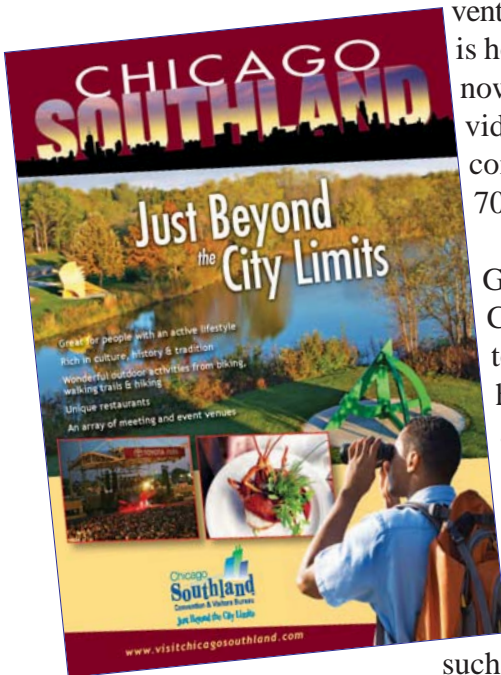
The Chicago Southland Scoop!

January 2011



2011 Visitors Guide, Coupon Book Released

The 2011 Chicago Southland Visitors Guide, the official regional destination publication of the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau, is hot off the presses and now available both individually and in bulk by contacting the CVB at 708-895-8200.



The 2011 Visitors Guide is arranged into Categories, where visitors will find regional hotels, restaurants, attractions, shopping, golf courses, recreational areas, cultural institutions, and other amenities in the Chicago Southland, such as business and professional services. The content of these categories is then grouped into “Areas” of the Chicago Southland.

“We’ve found visitors appreciate looking for the category listing first, as opposed to grouping all of the amenities in each area together,” said Chicago Southland CVB President/CEO Jim Garrett.

A feature story on Birding in the Southland is included in the 2011 version of the popular Visitors Guide. Other highlights in the guide include big-name concerts and Chicago Fire soccer at TOYOTA PARK; touring musical acts at the First Midwest

Bank Amphitheater and the Country Club Hills Amphitheatre; Major League Baseball at U.S. Cellular Field with the Chicago White Sox; harness racing at Balmoral Park; and Windy City ThunderBolts baseball at Standard Bank Stadium, the Children’s Museum in Oak Lawn, plus much more!

The Visitors Guide is distributed through phone, web, e-mail, social media and mail inquiries generated from public relations efforts and advertising fulfillment.

The guide is also distributed at the Chicago Southland Lincoln Oasis Visitor Information Center in South Holland and Midway Airport, and in numerous additional locations throughout the region. All Southland hotels, municipalities and chambers distribute the guide free of charge. Call 708-895-8200 today for a free copy or bulk shipment of the 2011 Chicago Southland Visitors Guide, or e-mail a request to info@visitchicagosouthland.com.

The CVB also released its Discount Coupon Book containing 45 coupons for area restaurants and attractions.



The Coupon Book is distributed primarily to out-of-town visitors and is not generally available to local residents. However, CVB members who want to offer their coupon locally may do so at www.visitchicagosouthland.com.

Redesigned website features functional member pages

If you haven’t already taken a look at the redesigned Chicago Southland CVB destination website, be sure to check it out at www.visitchicagosouthland.com. CVB members are urged to search and view their own “Member Page,” which presents all member information on a separate page.

Each Member Page includes the following elements:

- Member name, address, phone, fax, e-mail and link

- Business Logo
- Business Photo
- Open to the Public Event Listings
- Coupons
- Maps

continued on Page 3

Tinley Park Convention Center hosts Hard Hat Party

Mid-Con Hospitality held a “Hard Hat Party” in November for a sneak peek at the expanding Tinley Park Convention Center at I-80 and Harlem Avenue.

The Tinley Park Convention Center is adding 24,000 square feet of exhibit space, bringing the largest clear-span space to over 58,000 sq. ft. As hard-hat wearing planners took tours of the evolving space, Mid-Con sales managers guided them through the future exhibit hall, breakout rooms and the new kitchen. Architect’s

renderings were interspersed throughout the construction zone, giving planners a mental picture of the new facility.

Planners and others in attendance enjoyed food and refreshments provided by the Convention Center’s vendors. The convention center’s culinary team, led by Executive Chef Steve Poskin, whipped up delicacies for the crowd.

The first phase of the expansion will be finished in February 2011 and the entire project will be complete by June 1, 2011.



Local Tourism Marketing Grants Awarded to IPO, Oak Forest

The Chicago Southland CVB awarded \$5,653 in Local Tourism Marketing Grants to the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra and the City of Oak Forest to market their upcoming events. The Illinois Philharmonic received a \$2,433.00 grant for development of their Digital Technology Program involving e-marketing, video channels, and other digital marketing tools.

The City of Oak Forest received a \$3,220.00 Local Tourism

Marketing Grant for a billboard and advertising for their March 12, 2011 Oak Forest Fleadh, a festival of Irish culture.

The Chicago Southland CVB annually allots \$46,000 in grant funding for local festival and event marketing and attraction marketing.

For information about the CVBs Local Tourism Marketing Grant program, call 708-895-8200.



The Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra received a \$2,433 Local Tourism Marketing Grant for Digital Technology upgrades. Accepting the grant, from left: Corinne Johnston, Illinois Philharmonic Director of Development; Edmund Feingold, Illinois Philharmonic Executive Director; and Sally Schlesinger, Chicago Southland CVB Exec. Vice President.



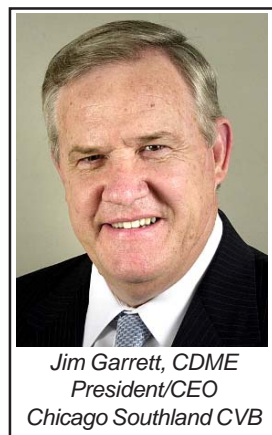
The City of Oak Forest received a \$3,220 Local Tourism Marketing Grant for advertising for their 2011 Oak Forest Fleadh, a citywide festival of Irish culture to be held March 12, 2011. Accepting the award, from left: Adam Dotson, Oak Forest Community Development Director, and Jim Garrett, CDME, Chicago Southland CVB President and CEO.

Southland hospitality sector showing signs of rebound

Recent statistical data gathered by the Illinois Office of Tourism and Smith Travel Research, a leading hotel performance data company, indicate the tourism and hospitality sectors are poised for a modest recovery in 2011 throughout the Chicago Southland and across the State of Illinois.

Hotel occupancy in the Chicago Southland is up 7.6% in the 13-month period from November 1, 2009 to November 30, 2010, to 53.6% occupancy.

ADR, or Average Daily Rate – the average rate hotels charge to rent a room for one night – is still down for the November '09 through November '10 period, but only by -2.7% for an ADR of \$68.71. In November 2010, ADR in the Southland demonstrated its first positive gain since January 2009.



Jim Garrett, CDME
President/CEO
Chicago Southland CVB

Another positive indicator is "RevPar," or Revenue Per Available Room, the room revenue divided by the rooms available, which rose 4% in the Southland, averaging \$37.17.

During the 13-month period in the Chicago Southland region, over 1.25 million hotel room nights were sold, with estimated revenue in excess of \$87.2 million. Both room nights and revenues are up substantially from the previous 13-month period.

Similar trends are in evidence across Chicagoland, with suburban hotels in the collar counties reporting an 11.7% increase in

Website features (from Page 1)

If your business is missing any of the elements listed on Page 1, please send the required information electronically to CVB Marketing Manager Kim Kislowksi at kim@visitchicagosouthland.com. Photos and logos should be .jpg files of at least 300 dpi.



of Illinois' tourism festival and event database.

Please send festival and event information and updates to Chicago Southland CVB Database Administrator Diane Graves at diane@visitchicagosouthland.com, or call her at 708-895-8200.

Municipalities and not-for-profits are encouraged to send their festival and event information to the CVB as soon as they are confirmed. This information is entered into the Chicago Southland CVB's searchable online festival and events listings for the region at www.visitchicagosouthland.com and also forwarded to the State

occupancy for the 13-month period, a -5.3% decrease in ADR for the period, and a 6.4% increase in RevPar for the period.

The rest of the state has not fared as well as Chicago and the collar counties, with the exception of several downstate communities, including Springfield and Galena.

I attribute the increases to aggressive sales and marketing efforts by both the CVB and our regional hotel sales staffs. Competition is fierce in the Chicago metro area and across the nation, so CVBs, hotels, convention centers and sports facilities must step up their efforts to attract new business to the region and its facilities.

The Chicago Southland CVB Sales Team continues to reach out to association and corporate meeting planners, group tour operators, sporting event planners and rights holders, and reunion and social event organizers to book new business into the Chicago Southland region. In the 13-month period from November 1, 2009 to November 30, 2010 the CVB Sales Team gathered 276 leads for potential new business, with 72 leads converting into definite business for the Chicago Southland region. This booked business directly and conservatively translates into an economic impact of over \$3.1 million for the Chicago Southland region.

While the numbers demonstrate positive gains for the hospitality and tourism sectors in Illinois, statewide tourism funding is at risk as legislators seek to shore up the faltering state budget.

Restoring funding for Illinois tourism marketing to Midwest, national, and international audiences should be at the top of the agenda for legislators, as full hotels and convention centers mean more economic activity from business and leisure visitors to our state. On the regional level, continued funding for CVBs, Tourism Development Offices and staffed Illinois Visitor Information Centers boosts the state's efforts to attract more tourism business to the state.

Tourism funding is a way to immediately reap the economic benefits of visitors as they enjoy themselves while they are here, spend money, and then go back home.



Holiday Inn Express & Suites food drive

Staff at the Lansing Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 2323 172nd Street, held an employee food drive to help those in need during the holiday season. Holiday Inn Express & Suites GM Aemish Patel (far left) said the food collected was donated to a local food pantry in Lansing.

Mark Your Calendar!
National Tourism Day Event
May 11, 2011
Details to follow. . .

Keep up with what's happening in the Southland!

The Chicago Southland CVB is gearing up for a busy Spring and Summer 2011 with the release of our new Visitors Guide and the many summer festivals and events throughout our Chicago Southland communities. The CVB website at www.visitchicagosouthland.com is a clearinghouse for regional festivals and events, and the first place to check out when visitors are looking for something to do in our region, so be sure any events your municipality or organization hosts that are open to

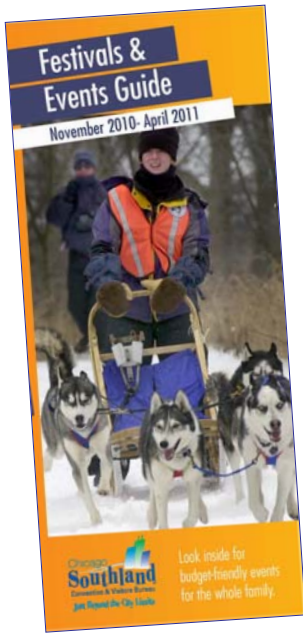
the public are listed in the Chicago Southland Festivals & Events listings.

Mark Your Calendar now for the CVBs annual **National Tourism Day Celebration, Wednesday, May 11!** We're working out the details now for a fun-filled event guaranteed to make your day!

Be sure to check out the CVBs Facebook page at **ChicagoSouthland** and on Twitter **@cscvb**. Timely updates on what's happening in the region are posted regularly.

CVB members can mail their flyer to 1,100 Southland business leaders with the CVB Mailbag, a monthly member benefit designed to get the word out about what's new in the Southland. For information about the CVB Mailbag, call us at 708-895-8200. Mailbag dates are listed below.

It's never too late. . .



. . . to get a copy of the **Winter/Early Spring Chicago Southland Festivals & Events Guide!**

After the Big Game, after Valentine's Day, when Cabin Fever sets in, the Festivals & Events Guide will help you find something FUN to do this winter!

Beat the Winter blahs and call the CVB now at 708-895-8200 for your free copy of the Chicago Southland Festivals & Events Guide!

Mailbag Materials Due:

February 9
March 16
April 13
May 11
June 15
July 13
August 17
September 14
October 12
November 9
December 7

Mailbag Sent:

February 16
March 23
April 20
May 18
June 22
July 20
August 24
September 21
October 19
November 16
December 14

Put your company's message here with Scoop Coupons!!!

Here's a New Year's deal for Chicago Southland CVB members only. Get a coupon for your restaurant, attraction, or event on the back page of the Chicago Southland Scoop for only \$25.00!

The coupons, pictured below, will be available on a first-come, first-served basis, and the number of coupons will be determined by the size of the Scoop for that month.

In 2011, the Chicago Southland Scoop will be delivered in January, February, April, June, August, October and December to 1,100 Chicago Southland CVB members, including municipal gov-

ernments, hotels, restaurants, chambers of commerce, and other hospitality-related businesses. Alternating months will feature an e-newsletter with up-to-date information and links, so be sure to send your e-mail address to Elizabeth Baun at elizabeth@visitchicagosouthland.com.

If you'd like to feature a coupon for your business in the February 2011 Chicago Southland Scoop, please contact Bob Lukens, PR Manager, at 708-895-8200 or via e-mail at bob@visitchicagosouthland.com.

Your Coupon Here!

Offer Here

Business Name

Address

Phone

Website

Your Coupon Here!

Offer Here

Business Name

Address

Phone

Website