

Chicago Southland TMI



Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau

Tourism Marketing Information



The 2015 Guides Are Now Available

The 2015 Chicago Southland **Visitors Guide** is now available. With 88 colorful pages including several tours, trails and other getaway ideas, the Visitors Guide also features accommodations, dining, things to see and do, arts & culture, shopping, transportation and other visitor amenities in Chicago's 62 south / southwest municipalities.

Check out several interesting features in this year's guide like the 2015 U.S. Amateur Championship, Top 10 Roadside Attractions, Harvest Happenings, Family Festival Fun, the Cal-Sag Trail, the Dixie Highway

100th Anniversary, Nightlife and Railfanning in the Chicago Southland.

Are you suffering from the holiday blues or is cabin fever setting in? Pick up the **Winter & Spring 2014-2015 Festivals & Events Guide** for the perfect remedy. The **2015 Discount Coupon Book** has 53 coupons offering great specials on dining, attractions, things to see and do, and services in the Chicago Southland.

The Coupon Book is distributed to visitors from out of town at local area hotels and visitor information

centers. To order additional copies of the Festivals & Events Guide or the Visitors Guide, call or email the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau today at 708-895-8200 or info@VisitChicagoSouthland.com.

For the most up-to-date listings of festivals and events, visit the online Chicago Southland Festival & Events Calendar at VisitChicagoSouthland.com/Events.

And the Winner Is...



2014 Guest Service Employee of the Year: Antrone McIntosh of the Motel 6 in Bridgeview



2014 Maintenance Employee of the Year: Gil Castillo of the DoubleTree by Hilton Chicago-Alsip



Award of Merit: Anthony Burton, Executive Director of the Matteson Parks & Recreation Department



Linda Morgan Award for Volunteerism: Greg Lochow, Executive Director of the Blue Island Area Chamber of Commerce



Patricia Chase Magon Municipal Leadership Award: The Village of Homewood



Awards of Merit: John Wilson of the Lan-Oak Park District and Diane Banta of the National Park Service

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau held its Annual Meeting & Luncheon on October 1st, 2014, at the Homewood Suites by Hilton / Elements Conference Center in Orland Park, IL. The event culminated with the annual Stars of the Industry Awards ceremony. The Chicago Southland CVB also presented five awards highlighting the contributions of its members and partners to the tourism and hospitality industries in the Chicago Southland.

CSCVB Held its Annual Award Luncheon This Past Fall and Presented the Following Awards



Keynote speaker: Marc Miller, Director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources



Member of the Year: Chuck's Southern Comforts Café in the Village of Burbank



Aldo DeAngelis Leadership Award: Dave Newquist, Community Development Assistant Director for the City of Oak Forest



2014 Manager of the Year: Sharon Brown of Homewood Suites by Hilton in Orland Park



2014 Housekeeping Employee of the Year: Lidia Raigoza of the Country Inn & Suites in Tinley Park

Congratulations to All of Our Winners!

"These awards highlight the best service in our region and are presented to the individuals and organizations that make a difference in the hospitality and tourism industries," said President / CEO Jim Garrett of the Chicago Southland CVB.

Millionth Grant Dollar Awarded



Village of Robbins, Back to School Festival - pictured left to right: Jim Garrett; Lisa Brock, Mayor's Administrative Assistant, Village of Robbins; Mayor Tyrone Ward, Village of Robbins and Sally Schlesinger.



SAFE Coalition for Human Rights, S.A.F.E. 2014 Conference, Village of Oak Lawn - pictured left to right: Jim Garrett; Dr. Kalyani Gopal, President, SAFE Coalition for Human Rights; Kelsey Kirk, Coordinator, SAFE Coalition for Human Rights and Ashley Frederick, Coordinator, SAFE Coalition for Human Rights.



Illinois School Library Media Association, 2014 ISLMA Annual Conference, Village of Tinley Park - pictured left to right: Jim Garrett; Stephanie Stielgitz, President, ISLMA; Jason Janke, Conference Chair, ISLMA and Sally Schlesinger.

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau is proud to announce that it has awarded its millionth grant dollar through the CVB's Local Tourism Grant program. The program supports local initiatives that market the Chicago Southland to visitors.

Member municipalities and sponsored organizations have earned 303 Local Tourism Grants since 1991. These grants help promote and market tourism, attractions and events. The CVB has helped provide matching marketing dollars for everything from major sporting events and conventions to promotions of the arts and even chili cook offs.

"The fact we can say the Local Tourism Grant program awarded its millionth dollar speaks to the relevance of the program over the past 23 years," said Jim Garrett, President/CEO of the Chicago Southland CVB. "The program has greatly evolved since 1991, and it has served the marketing needs of many associations, nonprofit organizations and communities that help attract visitors to the Chicago Southland."

To learn more about the local grant program, contact Kim Kisowski by email at Kim@VisitChicagoSouthland.com or call 708-895-8200.



Hotel Occupancy is on the Rise

According to Smith Travel Research, occupancy in hotels throughout the Chicago Southland increased 2.7% in 2014 (through end of November).

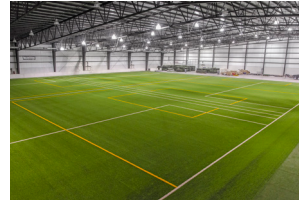
August soared 9.2% higher in 2014 than the previous year.

Southland Center Upgrades Turf

The Southland Center, a Ho-Chunk Enterprise has upgraded their facility from the turf to the sound system. The Ho-Chunk Nation invested in the future success of the facility by bringing in a professional management team to run and manage the facility. The Indoor Sports Management Group runs several sports facilities and will manage the Southland Center.

The biggest improvement the Southland Center made is the replacement of the older turf with DessoTurf. The next closest field with DessoTurf is the home of the Green Bay Packers, Lambeau Field. The unique Desso fiber shape and composition combines durability with long-lasting resilience and a soft touch for athletes. This provides optimal shock absorption and turning/set-off power that is uniform across the whole field of play.

SOUTHLAND CENTER
HO-CHUNK NATION



DessoTurf is a unique advantage for the Southland Center, and will help attract top tournaments who want to play on the same turf that many Premier League teams play on in England. The Southland Center also installed four full-size wood basketball courts. The courts have two electronic scoreboards each, seat up to 95 people per court and are sized for both high school and college regulations, making this a true multi-use sports complex that visitors and everyone in the Chicago Southland can use.

Get To Know the CSCVB New Hires



Juston Teach
Communications Manager

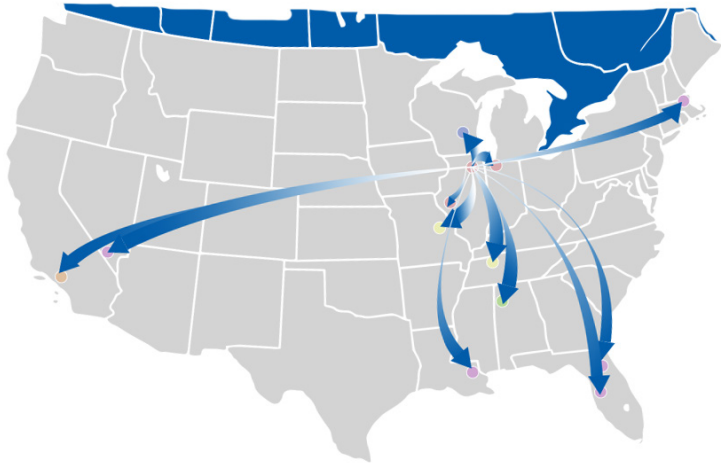


Tobie Fitzpatrick
Sales Manager

Juston is responsible for developing communications strategies that will provide positive exposure to the Chicago Southland. Juston will assist with the implementation of an annual marketing plan as well as various marketing / communications initiatives.

Tobie is responsible for bringing in group tour, military and hobby niche sales to the Southland. Previously Tobie worked at the Wyndham Grand Chicago Riverfront as a sales manager and comes to the CVB with over 20 years experience in the tourism and hospitality industry.

Upcoming Trade Shows



Convention & Location

American Bus Association: St. Louis, MO
National Tour Association: New Orleans, LA
ISAE Annual Convention: Springfield, IL
Diversity Summit: Newport Beach, CA
RCMA: Birmingham, AL
Select Travel: Nashville, TN
Heartland Travel Showcase: Chicago, IL
African American Travel Conference: Merrillville, IN
National Association of Sports Commissions: Milwaukee, WI
Meetings Quest: Providence, RI
Christian Meetings & Conferences Association: Jacksonville, FL
HelmsBriscoe: Las Vegas, NV
Destination Showcase: Chicago, IL
Collaborative Marketplace: Orlando, FL

The sales staff will be promoting the Chicago Southland as the premier meetings / group tour / sports destination for tourism and travel, all across the country in 2015. Here is a snap shot of where they will be over the next few months.

Annual Holiday Reception Declared A Success!



The Chicago Southland CVB held its annual holiday reception on December 3rd at the Georgios Banquets & Comfort Inn & Conference Centre. Members enjoyed a night of networking, music and hors d'oeuvres. Pictured - Rick Reinbold, Mayor of Richton Park & David Hinderliter, President / CEO, Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce.



Welcome To Our New Members!



7144 West 183rd Street
Tinley Park, IL
708-518-2239
350brewing.com



6431 West 127th Street
Palos Heights, IL
708-897-0003
anemonecafe.com



15350 South 94th Avenue
Orland Park, IL
708-349-6262
bucadibepo.com



21706 East Lincoln Highway
Lynwood, IL
708-757-7055
buschplastics.com



21 South Ash Street, Suite 1
Frankfort, IL
815-806-8081
chewonthisdogbakery.com



14844 Chicago Road
Dolton, IL
708-849-2100
chuckshaven.com



11861 SW 9th Manor
Davie, FL
954-474-9279
espyderwebdesigngroup.com



15652 Homan Avenue
Markham, IL
312-857-4154
fabsweetcreations.com



3263 Ridge Road
Lansing, IL
708-474-2471
lansingsportshop.com



14459 S. LaGrange Rd
Orland Park, IL
708-403-9099
papajoesrestaurant.com



2602 North Mattis
Champaign, IL
800-533-3781
thepremierprintgroup.com



18550 Stoney Island Ave.
Lansing, IL
847-980-3077
serbiansocialcenter.com



10 Southland Drive
Lynwood, IL
708-418-5554
mysouthlandcenter.com



19031 Old LaGrange Road
Mokena, IL
708-479-9700
stonepointgrill.com



21 South White Street
Frankfort, IL
815-543-5110
thisandthatfrankfort.com



11 South White Street
Frankfort, IL
815-277-2790
whitestreetcafe.com

CSCVB Completed Successful FrontLine Ambassador Training



The CSCVB recently completed another successful Front Line Ambassador Training seminar! With over 20 people in attendance this past October at Ariel's Bar and Restaurant in Tinley Park, the seminar aimed to create stronger employees armed with information about the Chicago Southland and customer service tips.

The next front line training is February 26th at 8:30 a.m. at the Holiday Inn Express-Crestwood. This free, two-hour seminar has limited availability and is worthwhile for both the experienced as well as new employees.

To RSVP call Diane by February 16th at 708-895-8200.

The Chicago Southland In the News

SouthlandNews

Southland interchange's time finally arrives

New ramps at I-57/I-294 likely to frustrate drivers lacking I-Pass

BY MIKE NOLAN
molan@southlandstar.com

The time finally came Saturday for the interchange that time forgot.

The first ramps linking Interstates 57 and 294 opened to traffic Saturday afternoon, completing the first phase of a full interchange project that's been talked about for years and which, local officials said, will give a boost to economic development in the Southland.

Legislators and mayors from more than 20 area communities gathered at the top of one of the new ramps and looked on as Gov. Pat Quinn said the interchange is a "mighty-needed project" and noted that the Southland region "for years and years didn't receive proper investment."

Speaking before Quinn, Kristi



Laffner, executive director of the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, noted it was a rarity in the nation's transportation system, with two interchanges crossing over each other but not connecting, and called it "the interchange that time forgot."

The initial phase that opened to traffic includes ramps connecting the southbound Tri-State Tollway with southbound I-57 and northbound I-57 with northbound I-294. Also completed were ramps from

the southbound Tri-State to 147th Street, and from 147th to the Tri-State's northbound lanes.

Speaking after the dedication ceremony, Ed Pense, executive director of the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association, said the interchange and 147th Street ramps will open up new opportunities for economic development.

The potential benefits "really can't be overstated," he said.

Intermodal terminals operated

by Canadian National Railway in Harvey and Union Pacific Railroad in Dolton will be helped by giving trucks quicker access to the Tri-State via the 147th ramp, Pense said, adding that there's also increased interest in industrially zoned vacant land near the interchange.

"We're hoping this (interchange) kicks things off," he said.

The interchange "opens the door to unlimited new tourism opportunities" for the area, said Jim Garrett, president and chief executive of the Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau. It also could lead to development of new hotels and restaurants nearby, he said.

Quinn said the interchange will have us a lot of fuel, and it's going to connect with I-57 will save 25 travel hours annually, according to the tollway, and the direct link will save \$4 million a year in fuel. It's estimated that 76,000 vehicles a day will use the interchange.

Construction on the interchange began in spring 2012, with preliminary work including the rebuilding of the 7-57 bridge over the Tri-State and widening of the Kedzie Avenue bridge over I-57.

The tollway authority and Illinois Department of Transportation had allocated \$380 million for the first phase.

One drawback for drivers without I-Pass is there are no coin baskets to accept the 76-cent toll charged at the interchange.

For now, drivers without an I-Pass transponder and account will have 30 days to go online to pay the toll. Come Jan. 1, drivers will have just seven days to pay unpaid tolls, according to the tollway authority.

Work on the project's second phase isn't scheduled to begin until 2023, and that will include two more ramps to connect southbound I-57 to northbound I-294 as well as northbound Tri-State traffic with northbound I-57.

That work is expected to cost \$300 million.

The I-57 and I-294 Interchange made the news when the first ramps opened this past October. *"The Interchange opens the door to unlimited new tourism opportunities for the area,"* said President/CEO Jim Garrett of the Chicago Southland CVB. The Interchange's second phase isn't scheduled to begin until 2023, which will include two more interconnecting ramps.

Mark Your 2015 Calendars

National Tourism Day Celebration, May 13th

Annual Meeting & Luncheon, October 7th
Hilton Chicago/Oak Lawn & Conference Center

Holiday Membership Reception, December 2nd DoubleTree by Hilton Chicago-Alsip

