

Jasper County Indiana

2016 TOURISM REPORT

LEADING IN LEISURE
AND AGRICULTURE



The vision for the Jasper County Tourism Initiative was conceived in late 2010 by members of the Jasper County Council who recognized the increase in economic impact possible by developing a vibrant effort to enhance local tourism. Today, travel, tourism and hospitality is Indiana's sixth largest private sector industry with direct employment of 144,200. With approximately 74 million total visitors spending \$10.7 billion annually, tourism's impact on Indiana is substantial.

In July 2012, the Jasper County Council adopted a 5 percent Jasper County Innkeeper's Tax with collection beginning in January 2013. Also in 2013, the Jasper County Commissioners created the Jasper County Tourism Commission (JCTC) to guide the tourism initiative and invest the innkeeper's tax dollars. The JCTC became operational in January 2014 and since then has supported activities designed to increase the economic impact produced by visitors' spending at hotels, restaurants, attractions, events, and related businesses.



In order to secure administrative and professional staff support, the JCTC partnered with the Jasper County Economic Development Organization, Inc. (JCEDO) for these services. Founded in 1986, JCEDO

is the economic development entity for Jasper County focused on business attraction, existing business expansion and assistance, and marketing Jasper County.

2015 JASPER COUNTY TOURISM COMMISSION

JAMIE MILLER — FAIR OAKS FARMS (PRESIDENT)
ED FEICHT — CITY OF RENSSELAER (VICE PRESIDENT)
LORI HAMILTON — INTERSTATE MOTEL (SECRETARY) *MOVED FROM AREA
ERIC VAN KLEY — SANDY PINES GOLF CLUB (TREASURER)
LINDA ABRAMSON — SUPER 8 REMINGTON
ANN MARIE LYNCH — SAINT JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

JCEDO ADMINISTRATION

KEVIN KELLY — PRESIDENT
SHEILA SCHROEDER — DIRECTOR OF TOURISM & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Visitors Authority (SSCVA) was approved that resulted in the creation of a branding package & logo, a website, advertising and promotional materials, public and media relations, festival and event marketing, and data tracking. The SSCVA is a multi-million dollar destination marketing organization for neighboring Lake County and tourism interests across northwest Indiana.

In order to benchmark other destination marketing organizations and to support tourism throughout the state of Indiana, the JCTC is a member of the Indiana Tourism Association (ITA) and regularly participates in their meetings, training sessions and legislative activity. The ITA advocates for tourism investment and promotion and provides programs that emphasize high standards for tourism professionals. In addition, the JCTC is involved with the Indiana Office of Tourism Development, the state agency dedicated to driving visitor and intrastate travel as well as place-making initiatives that enhance the quality of life and vitality for all Indiana counties and communities.



In 2015, the JCTC invested \$55,220 of Jasper County Innkeeper’s Tax revenues in fifteen tourism partner organizations across Jasper County for the purpose of supporting festivals and events designed to attract visitors and provide entertainment and cultural opportunities for local residents. These expenditures helped fund advertising, live entertainment, attractions and activities that resulted in increased attendance, energy, fun and excitement.

In addition to JCTC funding, five principal community festivals including Water Tower Days in Remington, Rock The Arts in Rensselaer, Touch of Dutch in DeMotte, Little Cousin Jasper in Rensselaer, and the Sandhill Crane Festival & Car Show in Wheatfield, received marketing support from the SSCVA for assistance in the creation and redesign of logos, posters, postcards, brochures, advertisements, news releases, and social media. In total, the SSCVA’s efforts generated 320 media articles valued at \$203,333 as well as \$26,456 in print and digital advertising.



A major new sporting event in 2015 that received significant JCTC support was the Saint Joseph’s College Thanksgiving Basketball Classic featuring a holiday weekend of men’s and women’s games. For big events, the JCTC provides funding on request. Smaller initiatives are supported through the Community Activities Support Program application process.



Indiana celebrates its bicentennial on December 11, 2016! Commemorative events ushering in the year took place in Jasper County in December and several activities have been designated as Bicentennial Legacy Projects. The Indiana Bicentennial Torch Relay, the signature event for the celebration, will traverse all 92 Indiana counties including

Jasper on October 11. Locally, nominations for torchbearers have been solicited and initial planning conducted for the Torch Relay.



Stay connected to what’s happening on the tourism, entertainment and fun front in Jasper County by following the Jasper County Tourism Commission on Facebook or visit the JCTC website at www.discoverjaspercounty.com.

2015 JCTC FINANCIAL RESULTS

Innkeeper’s Tax Revenue — \$138,505.61
 Total Expenses — \$99,298.98
 Tourism Fund Increase — \$39,206.63

INVESTING THE INNKEEPER’S TAX

- Jasper County Fair Association — \$15,000
- Saint Joseph’s College Basketball — \$8,000
- Little Cousin Jasper Festival — \$6,500
- Rock The Arts Festival — \$6,500
- Touch of Dutch Festival — \$6,500
- Water Tower Days — \$5,000
- Rensselaer OktoberFest — \$2,500
- Saint Joseph’s College Homecoming — \$2,500
- Sandhill Crane Festival & Car Show — \$2,500
- Helenor Alter Davission Historic Site — \$1,500
- Kankakee River Sandhill Crane Paddle — \$1,000
- Remington Ride — \$500
- Rensselaer Farmers Market — \$500
- Rensselaer Haunted House — \$500
- Iroquois River Fun Float — \$220

The tourism industry in Jasper County is comprised of numerous interrelated businesses, attractions and events. The JCTC has established relationships with these local and regional stakeholders as well as other tourism advocacy organizations. The purpose of this effort is to help coordinate and finance the promotion of Jasper County’s lodging opportunities, community festivals, sporting events, restaurants, recreational amenities, entertainment venues and attractions.



Jasper County’s lodging choices include five hotels and motels, one seasonal hotel, one bed and breakfast inn, three campgrounds, and Saint Joseph’s College. These entities provide quality overnight accommodations and also pay the Jasper County Innkeeper’s Tax of 5 percent of their lodging revenues to support the Jasper County Tourism Initiative. In 2015, construction started on a 75-room Comfort Suites in Rensselaer with opening in Spring 2016.

Unique natural attractions provide outstanding outdoor related enjoyment. The Jasper-Pulaski Fish & Wildlife Area offers 8,142 acres of wetland, upland and woodland game habitat, hunting, fishing, and the annual fall Sandhill Crane Migration. The Kankakee and Iroquois Rivers are scenic and open to floating and fishing.



The nation’s leading agritourism destination, Fair Oaks Farms, features tours of modern working pig and dairy farms, a cheese factory, numerous educational activities for children and adults, fast and fine dining options, and a gift shop. Carpenter Creek Cellars, Indiana’s favorite farm winery and tasting room, produces and showcases world-class wines which embody the best terroir and fruit in the Midwest. Two outstanding golf courses, Curtis Creek Country Club and Sandy Pines Golf Club, also offer pro shop services, dining, meeting, and special event facilities.

FEATURED ATTRACTIONS

- JASPER-PULASKI FISH & WILDLIFE AREA
- KANKAKEE AND IROQUOIS RIVERS
- FAIR OAKS FARMS AGRITOURISM ADVENTURE
- CARPENTER CREEK CELLARS WINERY
- CURTIS CREEK AND SANDY PINES GOLF COURSES
- DINING, SHOPPING AND ENTERTAINMENT
- TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL SERVICES
- CELEBRATIONS, SPORTS & HISTORICAL EVENTS

Enjoyable dining, shopping and entertainment venues range from unique, locally owned establishments to national and international businesses to local recreational facilities. Jasper County is also home to a series of transportation and travel services such as fuel stations and related businesses concentrated at the county’s five interchanges along I-65. These firms all help make Jasper County a regional destination.

other exciting happenings occur annually across Jasper County including parades and holiday celebrations, sporting events, and historical activities.



JASPER COUNTY LODGING INDUSTRY

- ECONOMY INN — RENSSELAER (31 ROOMS)
- FOUNTAIN PARK HOTEL — REMINGTON (36 ROOMS)
- HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS — RENSSELAER (69 ROOMS)
- INTERSTATE MOTEL — RENSSELAER (30 ROOMS)
- SUNSET INN — REMINGTON (50 ROOMS)
- SUPER 8 — REMINGTON (47 ROOMS)
- THE WHITE HOUSE INN — RENSSELAER (4 ROOMS)
- CABOOSE LAKE CAMPGROUND — REMINGTON
- LAKE HOLIDAY — DEMOTTE
- LITTLE CREEK CAMPGROUND — RENSSELAER
- SAINT JOSEPH’S COLLEGE — RENSSELAER