



VisitLakeCounty.org

*Economic Impact & Marketing Highlights
August 11, 2026*



Visit Lake County

- Celebrating 42 years of destination leadership in partnership with Lake County
- Inspired by the legacy of Maureen Reidy



- Dedicated Board of Directors
- Experienced Staff of 9, providing professionalism & continuity
- Award-winning marketing strategies
- Proven sales success & industry relationships
- Opportunity to review, refresh, renew for the next generation!



Visit Lake County Board of Directors



David Motley, Chair, City of Waukegan
Brad Burke, Vice-Chair, Village of Lincolnshire
John Krajnak, Treasurer, Six Flags Great America
Sonolito Bronson, Secretary, City of Zion
Cheryl Ross, Past Chair, Village of Gurnee
Heather Rowe, Chair-Strategic Plan, Village of Libertyville
Greg Koeppen, Chair-Community Engagement, Lake County Farm Bureau

Peter Abraham, Gurnee Mills
Carissa Casbon, Lake County Board
Justin Keenan, Village of Deerfield
Ray Keller, Village of Lake Zurich
Brad Lajoie, Lincolnshire Marriott Resort
Jim Moran, Village of Antioch
Brianna Ruggia, Great Wolf Lodge Illinois
Kevin Timony, Village of Vernon Hills
Tony Ugaste, Village of Mundelein

Mission

- Champion and advocate for Lake County as a premier tourism destination
- Create a positive image for Lake County
- Enlighten and elevate the profile of the county for residents, visitors and businesses
- Showcase and support our communities, attractions, outdoor recreation, and people



Visit Lake County Organization

- The Official Destination Leadership Organization (DLO) for Lake County (501c6)
- Public-Private Partnership – 200+ Partners
- Certified by DCEO/IL Office of Tourism
- DMAP Accreditation & CDME

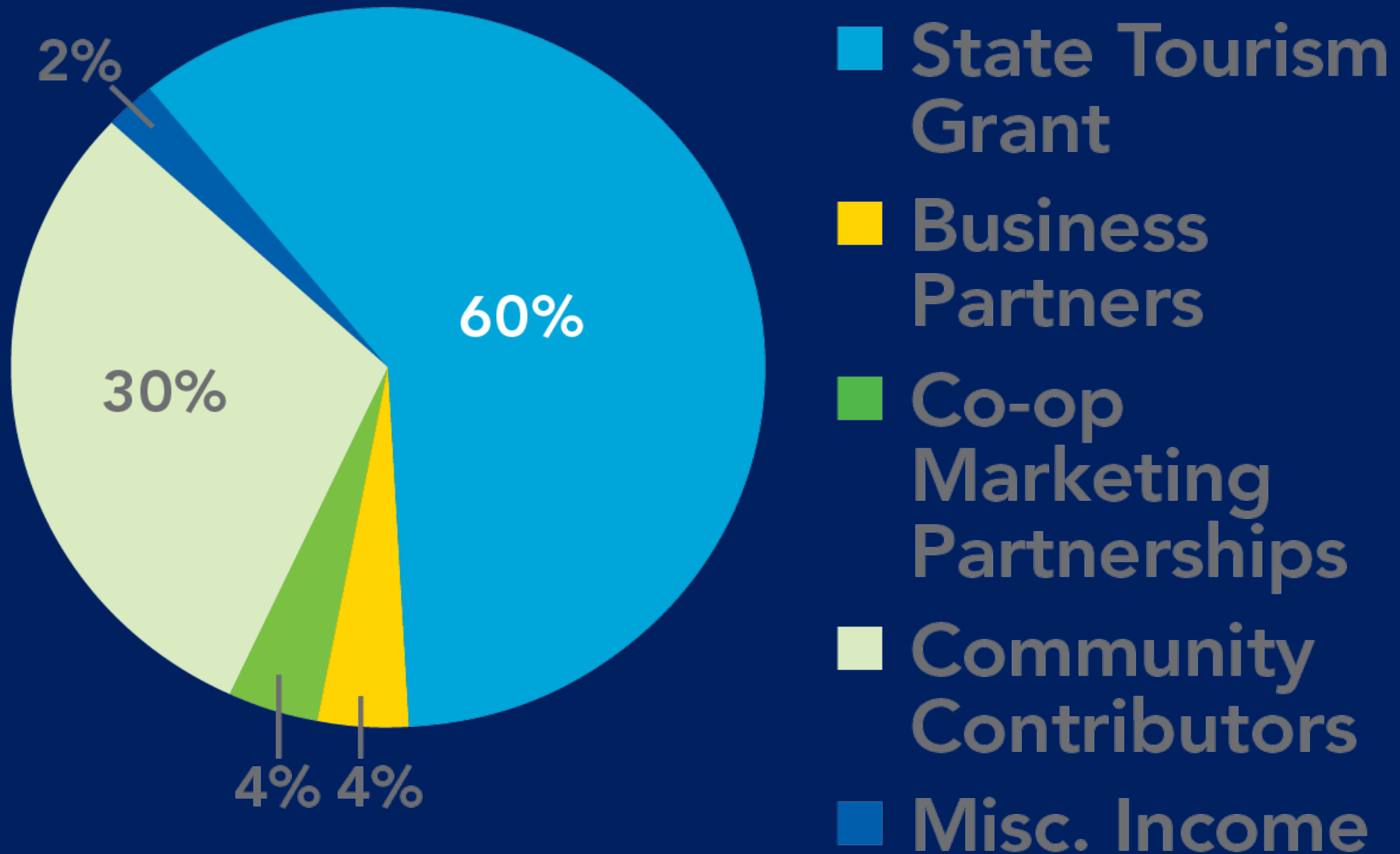


VLC Funding Sources

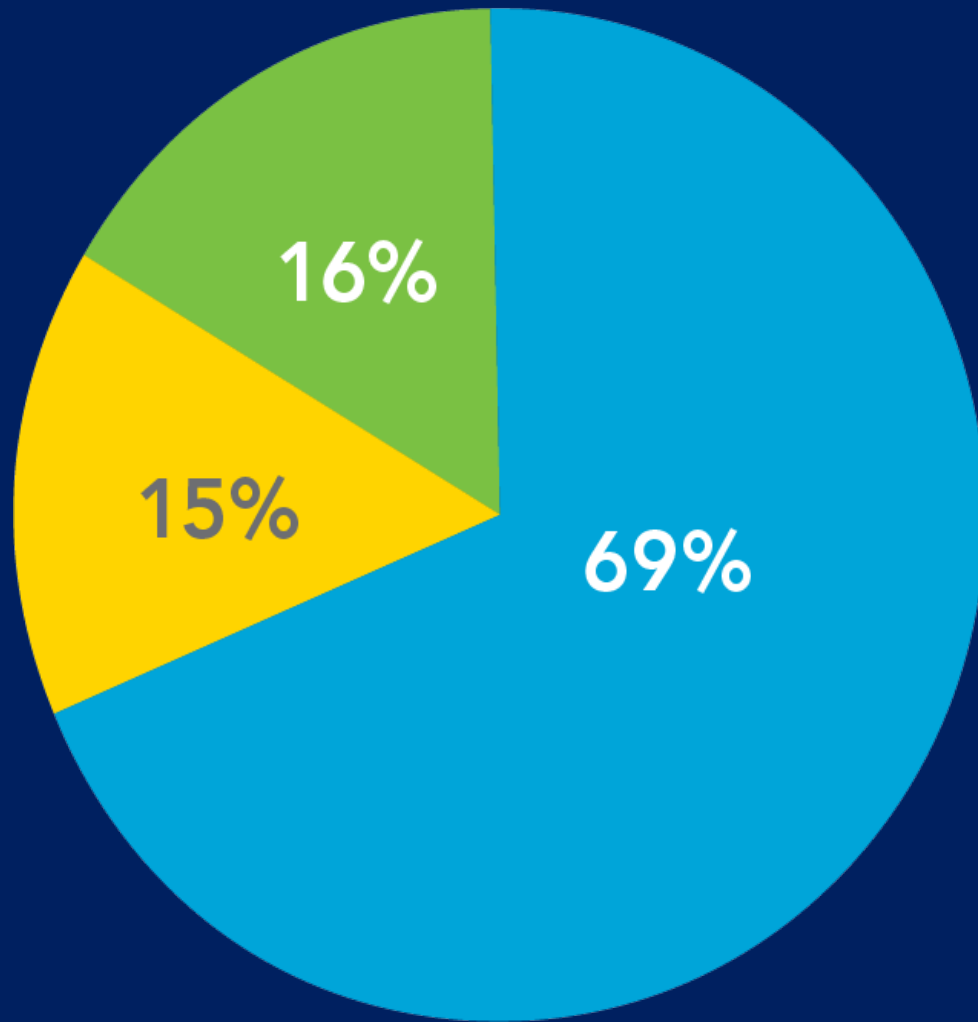
State Tourism Grant: \$1.5 million in FY '26

- Local Match Sources (50%)
 - Co-op Advertising Programs
 - Community, Attractions & Business Partnerships
- Lake County's Investment - \$157,500 + Hotel Tax %
 - Inclusive representation, enhanced public perception
 - Natural spaces and recreation
 - Support new arts & cultural initiatives
 - Engaged with underserved & smaller communities

VLC Revenue Sources



VLC Expenses



- Marketing & Advertising Programs
- Group Sales
- Administrative

VLC Budget:
\$2.5 million

The map displays Lake County, Illinois, with its major highways and geographical features. The county is bordered by Wisconsin to the north and Lake Michigan to the east. Key locations marked with red pins include Antioch, Fox Lake, Grayslake, Mundelein, Libertyville, Vernon Hills, Waukegan, North Chicago, Highwood, Highland Park, Deerfield, Lincolnshire, Long Grove, Lake Zurich, and Wauconda. Major highways shown are I-94, I-41, I-12, I-45, and I-21. A compass rose is located in the bottom left corner.

Leadership & Collaboration

- College of Lake County
Prairie Restaurant ~ VLC Hospitality Scholarship

- Lake County Forest Preserve District

- Lake County Workforce Development

- 15 Chambers of Commerce

- Lake County Partners

- ArtsLink North

- Fox Waterways Agency

- Naval Station Great Lakes

Celebrating Six Flags Great America



A cornerstone of tourism in the Midwest

Economic Impact of Tourism in Lake County

- **Visitor Spending \$1.96 Billion +1.7%**
- **15,514 Jobs**
- **\$71.1 Million in Local Taxes**
- **\$135.9 Million in State Taxes**
- **\$1 spent on tourism promotion returns
\$11 to the local economy**

*Source: US Travel Association
& Tourism Economics*



VLC Sales Team Recruiting New Business



VLC recruits sports tournaments, corporate meetings, reunions, and tour groups for Lake County.

Group Business Development

FY '26 Results

- Secured 315 groups
- 21,000 room nights
- \$10.7 million economic impact



"Remember when we all met
in Lake County, Illinois?"



That's what people say after a successful family reunion.

Just north of Chicago is beautiful Lake County. We offer so many places for the perfect family event; 75 lakes, forest preserves and picnic locations. You can also enjoy some of the area's best attractions including Six Flags Great America, Hurricane Harbor water park and the incredible Great Wolf Lodge. We also offer wonderful restaurants, hotels, entertainment and fun.

For a truly unforgettable reunion, make it Lake County, Illinois.

Contact reunion expert, Kimberly Ghys,
at Kimberly@LakeCounty.org to start
your planning!

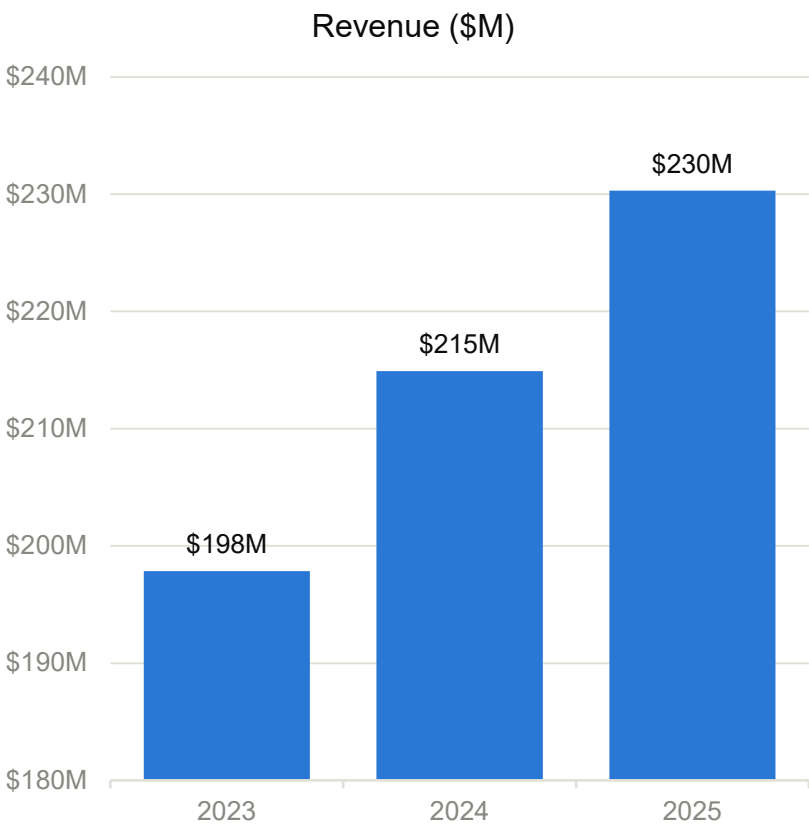
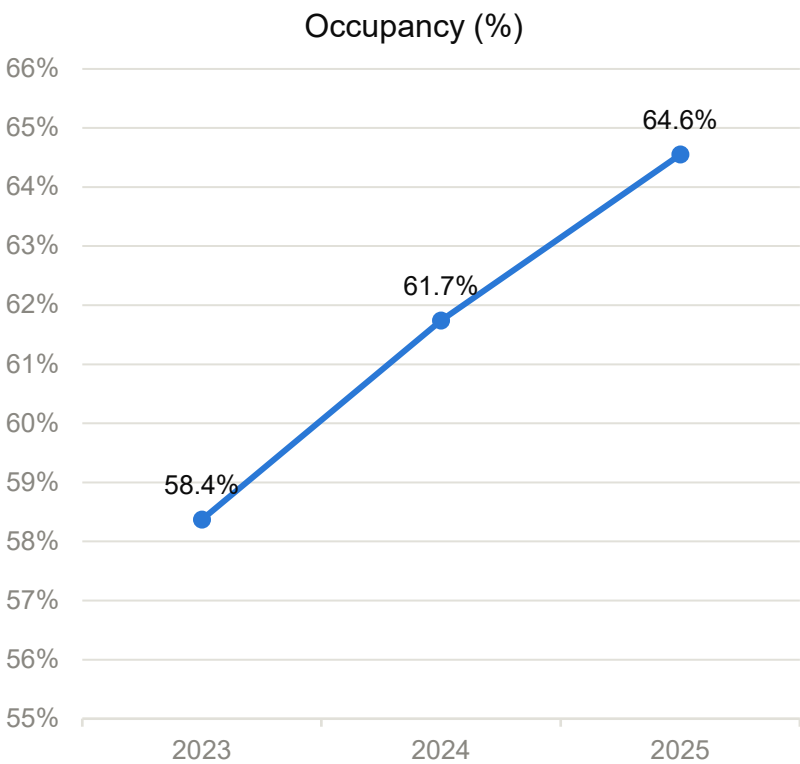


Visit LakeCounty.org
800-LAKE-NOW



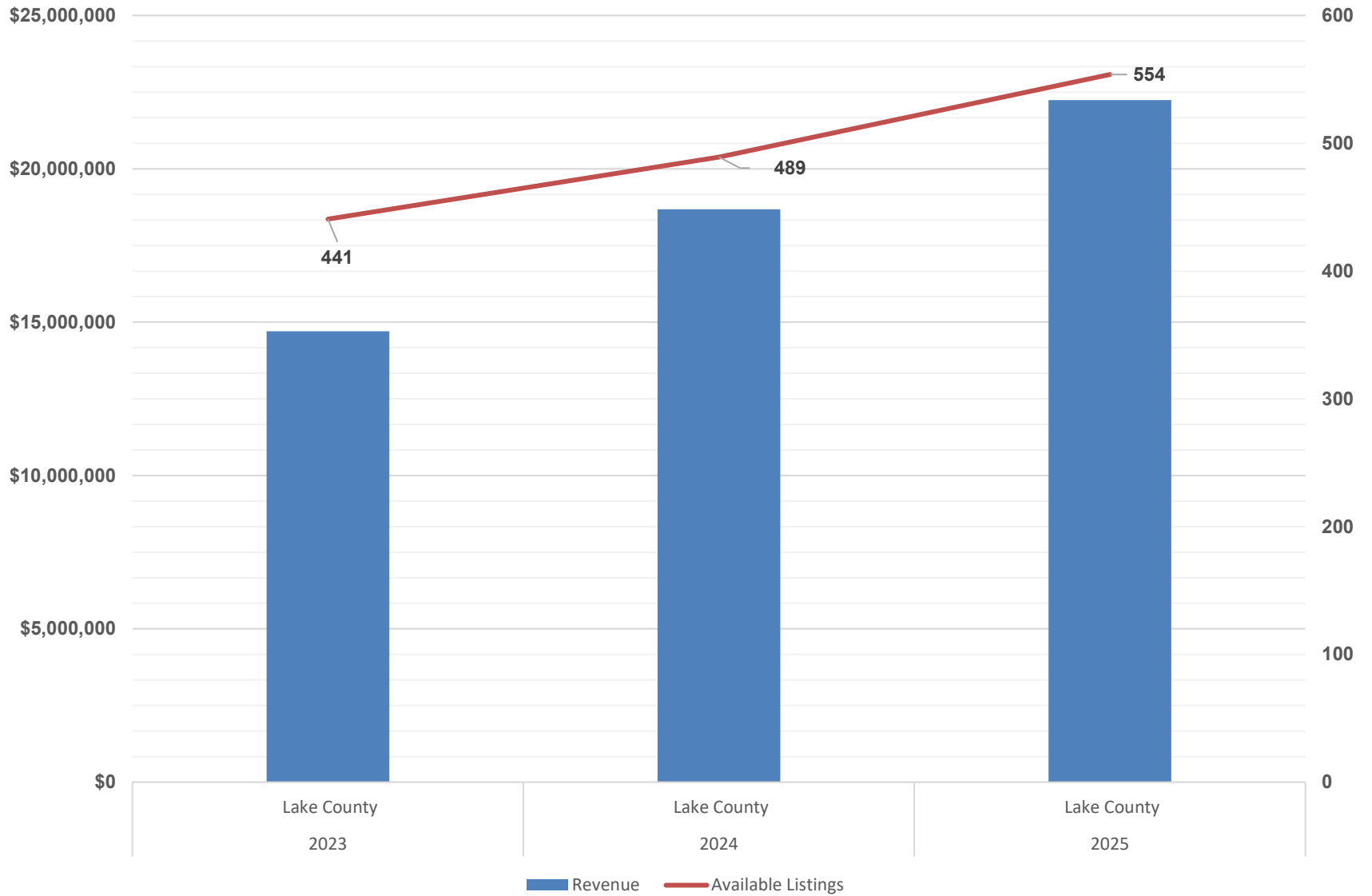
Lake County Hotel Performance

2023–2025



Source: Visit Lake County / Kalibri

Lake County Short-Term Rental



VisitLakeCounty.org & Visitors Guide



LAKE COUNTY CALENDAR OF EVENTS #1 Visited page on website

JUN. 1 - AUG. 6 EL MERCADITO FARMERS MARKET AND SUMMER PERFORMANCE SERIES IN ROUND LAKE BEACH 6/1/26 - 8/6/26 THE VILLAGE OF ROUND LAKE BEACH HAS ANNOUNCED THE 2026 RETURN OF EL MERCADI... EXPLORE EVENTS @ CULTURAL & CIVIC	JUN. 18 - AUG. 6 ZION PARK DISTRICT - CONCERT IN THE PARK 6/18/26 - 8/6/26 JUNE 18 - MOTOR CITY - THE MOTOWN REVUE IN MOTOR CITY... EXPLORE EVENTS @ ZION PARK DISTRICT BANDSHELL	JUL. 23 - AUG. 6 ARTS PARK IN WAUKEGAN 7/23/26 - 8/6/26 THE WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT'S ARTS PARK PROGRAM WILL BE ON THE ROAD BR... EXPLORE EVENTS @ BEVIER PARK	JUL. 23 - AUG. 6 SPLASHIN' THURSDAYS Every Thursday, June 4 - August 6, 11:15-1:30pm SPLASHIN' THURSDAYS IN WAUKEGAN 7/23/26 - 8/6/26 THE WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT IS HOSTING SPLASHIN' THURSDAY EVERY WEEK IN ... EXPLORE EVENTS @ SPLASHZONE IN CORRINE J. ROSE PARK
AUG. 6 NATIONAL NIGHT OUT IN GRAYSLAKE 8/6/26 JOIN THE GRAYSLAKE PARK DISTRICT AND THE VILLAGE OF GRAYSLAKE POLICE DEPART.	AUG. 6 AFTERNOON OF ART SONG AT RAVINIA FESTIVAL 8/6/26 THE SINGERS PROGRAM AT THE STEANS INSTITUTE PROVIDES AN EXCEPTIONAL OPPORTU...	AUG. 6 SNOWY SOUNDS OF SIBELIUS AND STRAUSS AT RAVINIA FESTIVAL 8/6/26 HAILED BY THE NEW YORK TIMES AS "PERHAPS THE FASTEST-RISING...	AUG. 6 THE BOXMASTERS THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2026 8:00 PM BILLY BOB THORNTON AND THE BOXMASTERS AT GENESEE THEATRE 8/6/26 BILLY BOB THORNTON & THE BOXMASTERS ARE HITTING THE ROAD FOR...

Social Media & Digital Marketing



visitlakecounty

visitlakecounty Edited • 11w
Chocolate lovers, this one's for you!
@EnjoyLongGrove's 26th Annual Chocolate Fest is a three-day celebration of all things chocolate May 15-17. From chocolate pudding pie pops to burgers with chocolate sauce, live music and the beloved Chocolate Scavenger Hunt for the kids — this is the sweetest weekend of the year! 🍫
📍: @explorelonggrove
@Long Grove Confectionery Co



visitlakecounty

visitlakecounty 56w
🐾 It's National Kitten Day! Celebrate by adopting a furry friend at @LambsFarm in the Libertyville/Green Oaks area, where every adoption supports programs for people with developmental disabilities. 🐾❤️ Stop by the Dogwood Pet Shop and make a difference—because love is better when shared!
📍: @LambsFarm

#letsgolakecounty #visitlakecounty #lakecounty #lakecountytill #illinois



visitlakecounty

visitlakecounty 45w
🍷 The sweetest stroll of the season is back! On Oct. 18, enjoy the Sips & Sweets Sparkling Wine & Chocolate Walk in historic downtown @VillageofGrayslake. Visit local businesses, sip sparkling wines and savor decadent treats for the perfect Sweetest Day outing with friends or a date! 🍷
📍: @VillageofGrayslake

#letsgolakecounty #visitlakecounty #lakecounty #lakecountytill #illinois #letsnaplakecounty #letsgolakecounty #enjoyillinois #onlyinillinois #winewalk #cheers #champagne #bubblybar

View insights Boost post

44 44 44 44 44

Liked by otoolerville and 43 others



visitlakecounty

visitlakecounty 12w
Rev up your summer! Park on Park Cruise Night returns to Downtown @Mundelein_IL every Wednesday starting May 13. Classic cars, antique trucks, live music and food vendors make this the ultimate weekly summer hangout for the whole family! 🎶 All vehicles 25 years and older are welcome to show.
📍: @Mundelein_IL

#LetsGoLakeCounty #carshow #cars #carsofinstagram #car

View insights Boost post

28 28 28 28 28

Liked by fascinating_fez and 27 others



visitlakecounty

visitlakecounty 57w
Get ready for Harborpalooza! 🎉🎉
Beat the heat at @HBCLakefrontBiergarten in @Winthrop_Harbor_IL from July 11-13 for three days of live music, delicious beer and a vibrant craft market.
📍: @HBCLakefrontBiergarten

#letsgolakecounty #visitlakecounty #lakecounty #lakecountytill #illinois #letsnaplakecounty #letsgolakecounty #enjoyillinois #onlyinillinois #summerfestival #festival #summer #musicfestival #music #livemusic

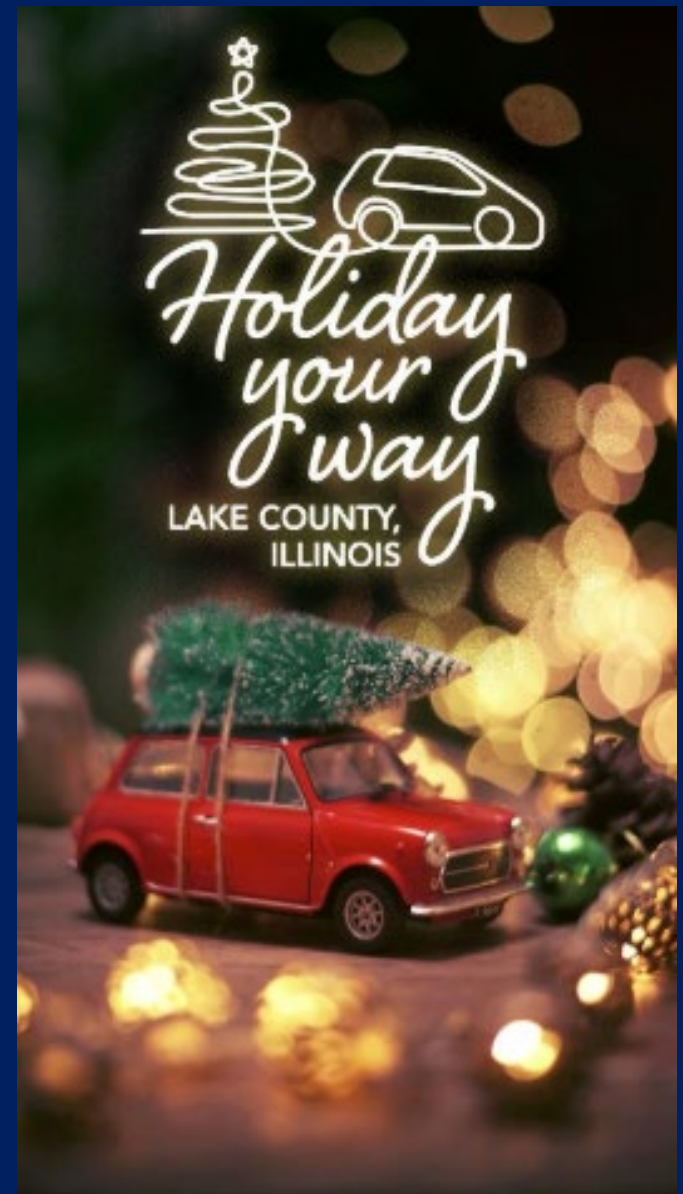
View insights Boost post

34 34 34 34 34

Liked by fascinating_fez and 33 others

July 1, 2025

Seasonal Marketing Campaigns



Summer Road Trips to Lake County

Enjoy a summer like you remember!

Plan a one-tank getaway in unforgettable Lake County, Illinois.
Start planning today at VisitLakeCounty.org.



Lake County Flavor Festival

SIP SAVOR CELEBRATE

MEMORABLE MEALS | CRAFT BEVERAGES | EXCITING EVENTS

A MONTHLONG CELEBRATION OF FOOD, DRINK & FUN

GET A TASTE AT VISITLAKECOUNTY.ORG/FLAVOR-FESTIVAL

LAKE COUNTY FLAVOR FESTIVAL

OVER 100 PARTICIPANTS. HOW MANY CAN YOU HIT?

FEBRUARY 1-28

VISIT LAKE COUNTY ILLINOIS



LAKE COUNTY FLAVOR FESTIVAL

2026 WRAP-UP



Sip. Savor. Celebrate.

This marks the third year of the Lake County Flavor Festival, a monthlong celebration of food, drink and fun, and it built on the success of its inaugural year. Combining restaurant month with Libation Trail, we encouraged people to be adventurous, try a new restaurant or brewery, find a new favorite dish or cocktail, and make sure to bring their friends, and taste buds, along for the ride. With an event lasting the entire month of February, it gave diners a greater opportunity to visit a variety of our partner locations, participate in the check-in challenge and experience all of the Flavor Festival offerings.

HIGHLIGHTS



90+ PARTICIPATING PARTNERS 
27 COMMUNITIES REPRESENTED 
11.5 MILLION TOTAL CAMPAIGN IMPRESSIONS 



TESTIMONIALS

Just when we thought we have been everywhere, Flavor Festival comes around, we realize how many places we have not yet tried! It's a great event getting us to think outside our usual box.

The Flavor Fest is a great way to be reminded of old places we haven't been in a while and also to try new ones."

It was so much fun, next year I am bringing friends from out of town to experience it.

We are lucky to have so many amazing places to eat, drink and gather in our county!

I absolutely loved it and I can't wait to do it again! I want to hit it more places next time!

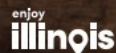
Lake County Libation Trail



More than 20 breweries, wineries and distilleries in one county! In Lake County, Illinois, just north of Chicago, there's always something to celebrate! Find the full list at VisitLakeCounty.org/Libation-Trail.



#LCLibationTrail • #LetsGoLakeCounty • VisitLakeCounty.org
Please sample responsibly.



Travel Industry Evolution

- Tourism Funding Challenges
- Short Term Rentals affecting hotel occupancy
- AI trip planning & content is changing workflow, website traffic & metrics
- Social media vs traditional media
- Small business / hospitality industry changes
- Lifestyles & spending habits

Visit Lake County 2026 Hospitality Heroes



Long-time front line/back-of-the house employees:

- Kimberly Witt, Six Flags (45 years)
- Rafael Hernandez, Lambs Farm (33 years)
- Lilliana Gomez, Springhill Suites, Marriott Lincolnshire (21 years)
- Fran Clinton, Townplace Suites Waukegan (16 years)
- Dani Brey, BBQ'd Productions (10 years)



Enjoying the ride together



VISIT LAKE COUNTY ANNUAL LUNCHEON

Annual Luncheon - Thursday, Sept. 3

10:00 - "Nightlife Task Force" Workshop!

11:00 - Registration & Networking

Noon - Luncheon Program and Keynote Speaker

Michael Jacobsen, President & CEO of the Illinois Hotel & Lodging Assn.



Travel & Tourism is Essential to Lake County

- Supports communities
- 15,000+ jobs at every level
- Inspires new businesses & investments
- Bridges generations and cultures
- Lessens the tax burden of residents
- Elevates the quality of life in Lake County



Thank you for your Investment in Tourism!

Greetings from



COUNTY, ILLINOIS

