

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Light Contest Voting Now through December 16th
- Winter in the Village at Lakehaven Hall December 13-17
- December 31—Chamber membership and events due
- Early February—Visitor Guide books will be available
- Visit [Kewaunee.org](http://Kewaunee.org) for a complete listing. Click on "EVENTS"



*Wishing you  
and yours a  
very Merry  
Christmas and  
a Happy and  
Healthy 2018!*

*The Chamber  
Board & Molly*

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## Kewaunee County Holiday Light Contest

The Kewaunee Area Chamber of Commerce has joined with the Algoma and Luxemburg Chambers to sponsor the Great Kewaunee County Holiday Light Contest.



This is a great event allowing individuals and businesses to show their holiday spirit with Christmas lights and decorations. The categories are as follows:

- ♦ Residential Retro Themed
- ♦ Residential Classic Themed
- ♦ Business Retro Themed
- ♦ Business Classic Themed
- ♦ Best Non-Profit
- ♦ Best Griswold Themed

**Retro**—No matter what decade you were born, the Christmases of past are always held close to the heart. Perhaps you are inspired by 1920's modern, 1960's kitsch or 1940's glam. Rule of Thumb: if a cell phone was part of your holiday, it is not considered retro!

**Classic**—For those who prefer a more traditional approach, you may enter under the "classic" category.

**Griswold**—If you've got a cousin Eddy, or a spare RV to decorate, consider channeling your National Lampoon's Christmas

Vacation vibe and enter for the Best Griswold themed house!

The goal of this event is to provide some friendly competition between the areas of the county as well as getting visitors from Door, Brown, and Manitowoc counties to Kewaunee County to check out all of the lights and vote for the best decorated home/business in each category. Don't worry, local residents can vote as well! There is no official panel of judges, so be sure to convince your friends to vote for you!

Judging is now underway! Visit the Chamber's website and click on the Events Tab or the Light Contest banner to view or print a map of the entries.

Cast your vote online by clicking on the link or print a paper ballot and drop it off at any Bank of Luxemburg locations in Kewaunee County. Voting goes through December 16th.

The best decorated homes and businesses in each category will receive a \$50 Wisconsin Public Service credit.

## Annual Meeting & Banquet

The 2017 Annual Meeting and Banquet was held at JW's Place in Slovan on October 3rd. The following board members were elected at the meeting: Jeff Kleiman, Ben Kornowski, Beth Liebherr, Joe Mills, Jodi Tess, Julie Thoreson, Brian Vogeltanz, Vicki Vollenweider, and Jamie Witcpalek. The board members will be serving

varying terms to ensure stability and a smooth transition when new board members are elected.

Following the meal, those present heard from Niki Pettit from Insight Creative.



Niki talked about different marketing opportunities and trends in advertising. Those in attendance found her presentation very informative and some have scheduled a meeting with her to further discuss marketing opportunities.

**"The Wisconsin Department of Tourism reports that direct visitor spending rose to \$17.6 million in 2016 for Kewaunee County, which is up from \$17.4 million in 2015."**

**Kewaunee County Rural Tourism....**  
(be sure to check business hours)

1. Three wineries... the oldest in the State, von Stiehl Winery; and two with vineyards, Parallel 44 and Cold Country
2. Kewaunee County Barn Quilts
3. Farm Tours at Pagel's Ponderosa, Alpaca to Apparel, and other local farms
4. County Parks
5. C.D. "Buzz" Besadny Fishery
6. Kewaunee County Historical Society with the largest collection of photos in the state
7. Jail museum
8. Riverview ATV park
9. Art Walk
10. World's Largest Grandfather Clock

## Rural Tourism: It's Never Been a Better Time to be a Small Town

By Joanne Steele | *RuralTourismMarketing.com*

Times have never been better for adding tourism to a small town's economic mix.

### Centerville, TN. Birthplace of Minnie Pearl and home to the famed Grinder's Switch.

Here's why: For the first time ever, rural communities can become successful for being exactly who they are.

One of the biggest objections to tourism is that residents don't want their small town to be "Aspenized" or "Bransonized". They are afraid of becoming discovered, which could lead to big development, increased land values and cost of living, and loss of the small town way of life they love.

In the past five years tourism has seen some big changes. Large numbers of travelers have lost interest in cookie cutter restaurants, lodging and attractions.

Instead, they want local food, local attractions and connection to the lifestyles of local people. This has led to huge new trends – the Slow Food Movement, Authentic Tourism, Geotourism, Agritourism, Heritage Tourism and more.

Geotourism is all about preserving local culture. Heritage tourism is getting visitors onto the backroads looking for historic churches, quilt barns and traditional crafts. Authentic tourism attracts visitors who like to see things just the way they are. The Slow Food Movement is getting people off the Interstate and into small town restaurants, where local cafes serve up their own specialties.

There is a ready market of interested visitors for small towns that are prepared to grow a tourism sector.

Preparing for tourism requires that a rural community take a critical look at itself.

It isn't necessary to hold big scoping sessions and do SWAT analysis to get started moving slowly to incorporate tourism into your economic mix.

Look at your region with a tourism lens. Do you already have visitors coming to fish, hunt, river raft, and hike? Without that tourism lens, it is easy to miss the value and opportunity of the traffic that outdoor recreation is already generating.

In the little farming community of Tulelake, California, thousands of visitors drive through the town on their way to birdwatching and hunting in the national wildlife refuges. One resident opened a bed and breakfast, and offered birding driving tours, capturing enough of these travelers to make a good living. Another entrepreneurial resident who sells auto supplies and sporting goods put in an espresso bar. Tulelake is slowly capturing the opportunity created by their location near an existing outdoor recreation destination.

In Kansas, The Kansas Sampler Foundation is helping small communities look at themselves in a new way. Local volunteers are trained to identify their town's assets in eight areas, architecture, art, commerce, cuisine, customs, geography, history and people. Townspeople begin to see their old buildings, their local art and customs with new eyes.

The Kansas Sampler Foundation doesn't initiate this work to ready towns for tourism. They do it because it helps local residents of towns as small as 600 or 800 see the value in their own communities. Sharing these gems

through tourism is one possible outcome.

Looking at the tourism potential of a region can lead to collaboration, with communities too small to offer all visitor services coming together to create a Regional Flavor Destination.

### A Harrison County, Ohio quilt barn.

The Harrison Ohio Quilt Barn project is a great example. The self-driving tour takes visitors throughout the county, past other small attractions, restaurants and lodging.

Rural tourism is vastly different from urban tourism.

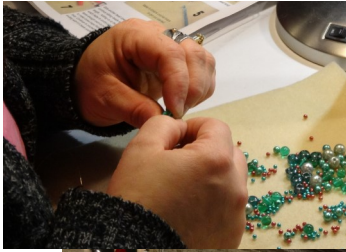
Rural tourism is about small locally owned businesses that support families. Urban tourism is mostly about big businesses creating low wage service industry jobs.

Rural tourism is about community and economic development. The reality for small towns and rural regions is that there is no money for business attraction.

The good news is that by building a tourism sector, a town is also implementing a business attraction strategy. Most business owners in small towns who aren't born there, are first attracted to the community as a visitor. Check this out by asking business owners in any successful small town with an active tourism economy.

These successful towns focused on strategies for welcoming new businesses and making it easy to open up shop, and the tourism industry took care of the marketing.

Agritourism is providing small family farmers another income stream, by capitalizing on their way of life as a product.



Photos from The Christmas Tree Ship Presentation & Craft Night.

## Membership & Events

If you have not already submitted your 2018 Chamber Membership, please do so!

Membership and events are due by December 31, 2017!



Your events for 2018 are also needed. The Visitor Guide will be printed in January so it is available for distribution in early February. The Chamber office receives

many requests for information by the middle of February. By not having Guide books and your events, our community is missing out on bringing visitors to town.

The Chamber website will also be updated in early January with the upcoming events and any membership changes. If you have any questions, please contact Molly at the Chamber.

### Member Brochures

Does your business have brochures that you want to distribute to visitors? One of the benefits of being a Chamber member is that you may have your brochures and literature displayed at the Chamber Building!

Please drop off your literature or let Molly know and she can pick it up when she drops off Visitor Guides. Please be sure that the Chamber has your latest information.

## Christkindlmarkt Wrap Up

The Christmas season kicked off in Kewaunee with the Holiday Parade on Friday, November 17th. The parade went on, even though there was plenty of rain and wind!

Santa was the highlight of the parade, but due to the weather, he had to ride inside a vehicle this year.

The vendors at the Christkindlmarkt market and the Christmas Stroll businesses stated that this was their best year in a long time. Thank you to everyone who came out and supported the vendors at the market and the local businesses on the Stroll.

Rochelle Pennington spoke about the Christmas tree ship that sank off the shores of

Two Rivers. Her presentation attracted over 100 visitors, many from outside of the area.

Those that attended Craft Night left with beautiful ornaments, cards, wreaths, jewelry and centerpieces.

As a sneak peak into next year, Rochelle Pennington will be back to talk about the Edmund Fitzgerald.



## Packers Game Day Bus Chamber Volunteers Needed

This year, the Chamber sponsored transportation to all home Packers games. For the first year, the undertaking was a success!

Two buses could have been filled for the Chicago Bears game! People were calling and wanting rides up until the bus was being loaded.

While the buses were not always as full for other games, it was a great benefit to offer

guests who stayed in Kewaunee at hotels, ate at local restaurants, and celebrated at the local bars when they returned from the game.

Looking ahead to next season, the Chamber plans to again offer transportation.

Hopefully with the word spreading, every bus to the game will be filled!

The Chamber Board is very thankful for the volunteers we had throughout the past season. Without the volunteers, the Tourist Information Center's hours would be very limited.

Most of the volunteers at the Chamber are typically retired individuals. We would like to attract a few more volunteers to allow for expanded hours and more flexibility for the

current volunteers. If you or someone you know may be interested in volunteering, please contact Molly. Molly will provide training and it is a great way to meet new people.

While many people from outside of the area contact the Chamber, there are many local residents as well that request information regarding other areas of the state.



# Fun in Wisconsin

About a month ago, the Chamber began advertising on the Fun in Wisconsin website. This website is visited by thousands of visitors looking for something to do in Wisconsin!

From the Fun in Wisconsin website, "Since 2002 we have enjoyed providing travel information through our seven print vacation guides that are distributed throughout the State of Wisconsin showcasing various places to Stay, Play, and Eat in unique destination areas that perhaps you never knew existed in Wisconsin.

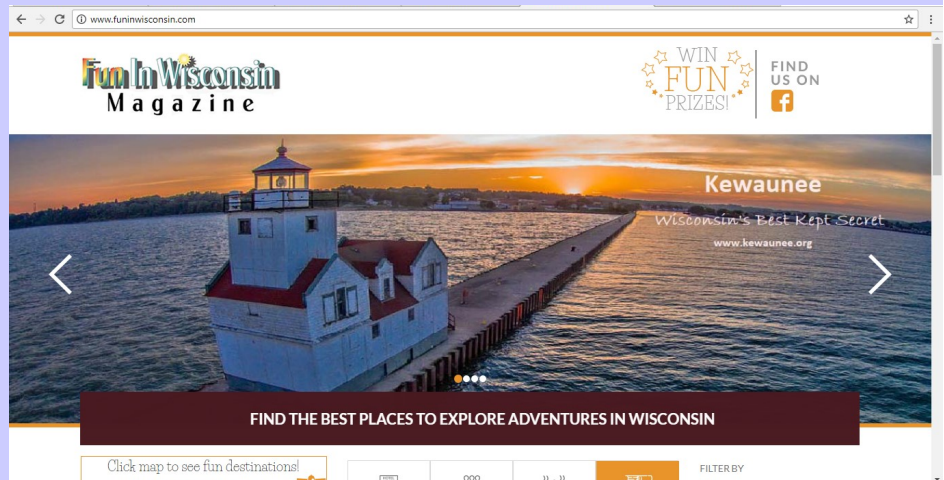
We have brought this information online with our new website to help connect travelers and tourists with our partner advertisers to aid in their vacation plan decisions.

Enjoy all of the exciting destinations in our beautiful State and if you can for a moment let us know how we can further help to make your vacation plans even more enjoyable through our [Contact Us](#) form."

One of the exciting features regarding the website is that the Chamber will be working with members to provide giveaways. The website has contests where visitors can register for these prizes. This is a great way to get people into your business!

As time goes on, we will be adding more information to the Fun in Wisconsin website. Currently clicking on Kewaunee

will drive visitors back to the Chamber's website. Because of this, it is vitally important that Chamber members contact the Chamber regarding upcoming events. Please submit your events to [admin@kewaunee.org](mailto:admin@kewaunee.org). Events will be placed on the calendar and larger public events will be added to the electronic sign at the Chamber building as well as banner ads on the Chamber's website.



## Rural Tourism (continued from page 2)

U-pick opportunities, farm tours, dude ranch type programs, and community supported agriculture bring urban dwellers who live a few hours away onto farms to learn more about where their food comes from and to buy local.

Taking the first steps toward tourism can be simple.

**Cawker City, home of the world's largest ball of sisal twine, A finalist for Kansas 8 Wonders.**

I'm a great fan of chambers of commerce. As part of their support for the existing business community of a town, they are the obvious organization to take these first steps. They work with economic development organizations and regional groups that understand the special needs and concerns of rural regions.

1. Look for visitors who are already coming to your region and determine what is attracting them.
2. Identify what the community can do to gain more benefit from these visitors. It can be improving signage, providing more community infor-

mation at places or businesses these people are already frequenting, or looking at services these visitors need that it would be easy to provide.

3. Look at your assets. The Kansas Sampler Foundation is helping small towns in Kansas look critically at what they already have. This is a fantastic activity. It doesn't look at what's needed or what small towns wish they had. It looks at what is already there. That catalog of assets helps rural regions see how they fit into the new tourism sectors mentioned above.
4. When a town is clear about what they have and know what they would like, it's time to ask for help from regional and state tourism offices. The Tennessee Department of Tourist Development is creating wonderful trails to connect rural communities and their rich assets to urban centers.

All across the country new scenic byways are being designated that bring people out of urban areas into the countryside.

Once a town has taken steps to evaluate its

tourism assets and interests, a tourism industry can be created that serves the town while honoring local traditions and lifestyle.

*Joanne Steele, President of Rural Tourism Marketing Group, shares her special knowledge and insights about the rural tourism at her blog, [RuralTourismMarketing.com](http://RuralTourismMarketing.com). She assists small towns and their businesses in the development and marketing their tourism industry.*

**"Wisconsin is a great state for a unique vacation, but one of the things that sets Kewaunee County apart most is being a place where small-town charm still exists. Visitors can truly enjoy themselves here and not worry about breaking the bank, dealing with long lines or bumping elbows; and we'll continue to work hard at getting this message out." - Jennifer Schneider, Kewaunee County Tourism Coordinator**