



STIHL® TIMBERSPORTS® Bringing Lumberjack Championships to Tinley Park

The STIHL® TIMBERSPORTS® Series announced recently that the premier U.S. lumberjack sporting event will be held outside one of the biggest cities in the United States – Chicago. The Series’ U.S. Pro and Collegiate Championships will be held at the Tinley Park Convention Center, July 15 – 16, 2016.

The STIHL® TIMBERSPORTS® Series – The Original Extreme Sport – pits the top lumberjack athletes from across the country in thrilling and grueling wood chopping, cutting and sawing competitions. For the third straight year, the Championships will air on the ABC network in the fall. The Professional Series will also re-air on ESPN and ESPN2.

“Bringing our Championships to Chicago Southland offers a tremendous opportunity for our sport,” said STIHL® TIMBERSPORTS® Series Executive Producer Brad Sorgen. “It’s a great fit in that a large segment of our fan base

and competitors are located in that region of the United States. Tinley Park Convention Center offers an amazing venue capable of housing thousands of fans, and with their support, we’re sure to have a big year.”

For the first time in the Series’ 31-year history, the Chicago area will host the Championships. The city’s large



footprint, growing midwestern fan base, and prodigious venue in the Tinley Park Convention Center, made it an attractive location for the sport’s biggest U.S. event of the year.

“We are excited to host the 2016 STIHL® TIMBERSPORTS® U.S. Pro and Collegiate Championships in the Chicago Southland,” added Jim Garrett, President / CEO for the Chicago Southland CVB. “Tinley Park and the Chicago Southland will receive tremendous national exposure.”

The competition averages 10 million viewers each broadcast and will showcase the Chicago Southland on a national scale. On May 11th, 2016, we invite you to learn more about the lumberjacks at our National Tourism Day event at our offices in Lansing. For more information about National Tourism Day, see page 7.

For more information on the 2016 STIHL® TIMBERSPORTS® U.S. Pro and Collegiate Championships or to order tickets, please visit TinleyParkConventionCenter.net.

Congratulations Anthony Burton!



SportsEvents Media Group, the leading industry publication focused exclusively on helping sports event planners produce excellent competitions in the United States, has announced Anthony Burton, Director of the Matteson Parks & Recreation Department, as one of its 2016 Parks and Recreation Professionals Readers' Choice Award winners.

Sports event professionals were asked to nominate sports events planners, host destinations and parks and recreation professionals that they believe display

exemplary creativity and professionalism toward the organizations and events they represent. Nominations were received from readers throughout the nation and the top picks were selected based on results from an online voting system.

"It's great having Anthony's hard work and dedication for the Village of Matteson, recognized by SportsEvents Magazine," said Jim Garrett, President / CEO for the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau. "His enthusiasm to bring in sports events to the area not only helps make a positive economic impact on the region, but his passion to help the youth of the Chicago Southland is unbridled and sets him above the rest."

"SportsEvents readers came out in force to nominate and then to vote for their favorite sports event planner, destination or parks and recreation professional. Our team is proud to honor the nominees that received the most votes with a 2016 Readers' Choice Award," said Carrie O'Connor, SportsEvents Editorial Coordinator. "It is clear, based on our readers' experiences, that these award winners are willing to go above and beyond to produce outstanding events that participants, their families and spectators will want to experience again and again."

April Food Day Raises Over 90,000 LBS of Food!



South-Southwest Suburban United Way's (SSWUW) annual April Food Day event raised over **90,000** pounds of food, to be given to seven local food pantries. Local food pantries estimate the need for food and toiletries have more than doubled in the past five years. While many individuals think of food pantries during the winter months, need is typically higher in spring and summer as donations decrease and supplies diminish.

The Chicago Southland hospitality industry helped lead the way in this year's annual April Food Day. The

Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau and over 60 hotels, park districts, businesses and municipalities throughout the Chicago Southland region collected food from March 1st – April 1st.

"Last year our goal was 12,000 pounds and we raised over 30,000 pounds for our local food pantries," said Jim Garrett, President / CEO for the Chicago Southland CVB. "It's inspiring when the Chicago Southland bands together and raises over 90,000 pounds of food for such a great cause and we thank everyone that donated."

On April 1, 2016, all collected food was taken to the Tinley Park Convention Center from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Donated food was packed up and delivered to the following pantries: Respond Now—Chicago Heights, Ford Heights Community Service Organization, Richton Park Food Pantry, Catholic Charities –South Holland, Restoration Ministries—South Holland, LBD Enterprises—Hazel Crest and Together We Cope—Tinley Park.

New Guides Now Available!



Hot off the presses is the 2016 Chicago Southland Visitors Guide which offers 88 colorful and glossy pages featuring information on accommodations, dining, things to see & do, arts & culture, shopping, transportation and other visitor amenities in Chicago's 62 south and southwest suburbs. The 2016 Visitors Guide contains many family-friendly events and features.

Highlights of the 2016 Visitors Guide include the guide to the perfect Girls' Weekend Getaway, Top 20 Things to See & Do, Pullman National Monument, Leave No Child Inside, Fests for All Seasons and Mancations in the Chicago Southland.

Also new to 2016 is the Spring & Summer Festivals & Events Guide and the 2016 Discount Coupon Book. The Festivals & Events Guide showcases the events that run from April – November and include favorites like

Gaelic Park Irish Fest, Lansing Autumn Fest, Frankfort Fall Festival, the Caribbean Block Party, Chicago Open Air Music Festival, schedules for the Windy City ThunderBolts and Chicago Fire and many more festivals and events.

The 2016 Discount Coupon Book has 46 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, as well as sent in response to visitor inquiries.

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

Welcome New Board Appointments!



Rick Reinbold
Mayor, Richton Park
SSMMA Appointment



Chris Paliga
Hollywood Park
Membership Appointment



Craig Vaughn
Southwest Airlines
Transportation Appointment

Chicago Southland CVB Awards Grants



The Love The Park – Fine Arts Fair - Village of Palos Park, \$1,338 - Pictured left to right: Kim Kislowski, Director of Marketing, CSCVB; Jim Garrett, President / CEO, CSCVB and Theresa Tevsh, Assistant Director Parks and Recreation, Village of Palos Park



Chicago Gaelic Park's Irish Fest - Village of Oak Forest, \$4,020 - Pictured left to right: Marian Ryan, General Manager for Chicago Gaelic Park; Jim Garrett, President / CEO, CSCVB and Sally Schlesinger, Executive Vice President, CSCVB



2016 Southwest Half Marathon & 10K - Village of Palos Heights, \$3,500 - Pictured left to right: Jim Garrett, President / CEO, CSCVB; Mel Diab, Race Director, 2016 Southwest Half Marathon & 10K and Jeff Prestinario, Race Director, 2016 Southwest Half Marathon & 10K

Upcoming Tradeshows



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. Here is a snap shot of where they will be over the next few months.

April 2016 - June 2016

National Association of Sports Commissions: **Grand Rapids, MI**

African American Travel Conference: **Cleveland, OH**

Fraternal Executives Association: **Kansas City, MO**

Travel Alliance Partners: **Duluth, MN**

HelmsBriscoe: **Phoenix, AZ**

Be Sure to Check Out the Chicago Southland CVB on Social Media

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau wants to hear from you! Be sure to like, comment and share our posts and remember to use the hashtag #ChicagoSouthland when posting content.



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U.S. Log Rolling Coming to Orland Park!



The 2016 U.S. Log Rolling Open is coming to Orland Park's Lake Sedgewick in Centennial Park on June 11th, 2016. The event will be regionally broadcasted on Comcast Sportsnet.

This national tournament will have

the distinction of being the season opener on the pro circuit in 2016, followed by the La Crosse Open and Midwest Championships (Madison, WI) in June. "It's going to be what we hope becomes a top professional tournament," said Tournament Director Katie Rick. "It's a new opportunity for the sport to expand into the state of Illinois."

Rick, who also operates and oversees the Three Rivers Roleo Tournament, was drawn to the Chicago Southland in part because of the marketing potential that the nation's third largest city presents. "It'll be a great opportunity, it's fantastic to be in a big market," says Rick. United States Log Rolling Association President Troy Birdsong agrees that stretching the sport into the Chicago Southland market is a major step forward for the sport of Log Rolling.

"One of our goals in the USLRA is to continue to support the expansion of the sport. It's very exciting to be in another new market, especially a market the size of Chicago," said Birdsong.

"The turnout among top pro rollers for the event should be strong due to the ease of accessibility the Chicago Southland has," said Rick. "It's close to Madison and Oconomowoc where there are top pros and solid programs." Jim Garrett, President / CEO for the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau is excited for the potential of this tournament. "To have a sport of this caliber come to the Chicago Southland shows the versatility and commitment our municipalities have," said Jim Garrett. "This Summer of Lumber is shaping up to be a monumental success."

During the 2016 Professional Log Rolling Open, STIHL® TIMBERSPORTS® will be onsite performing the various disciplines of their pro and collegiate event coming to the Tinley Park Convention Center, July 15 - 16, 2016.

For more information, please go to

VisitChicagoSouthland.com/USLogRollingOpen



Member Spotlight



the children's museum in oak lawn

708-423-6709

5100 Museum Drive, Oak Lawn

CMOakLawn.org

Tuesday - Saturday 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM

Sunday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Closed on Mondays

Admission

\$8.00 per Child

\$8.00 per Adult

\$6.00 per Senior (55+)

\$4.00 per Teacher

(with valid teacher I.D.)

\$4.00 Military Discount



The Children's Museum in Oak Lawn allows children to discover a world of fun and learning by exploring Nanoscience, theater, art and other fun and educational exhibits. The Children's Museum in Oak Lawn's mission is to positively impact a child's potential in life through play-based education. "Watching children learn through playing is what drives me," said Adam Woodworth, Executive Director for the Children's Museum in Oak Lawn. "We are proud to have such a wonderful learning environment be a part of the Chicago Southland."

Blue Island to Host Dragon Boat Festival!



On August 13th dragons arrive at Fay's Point for the first annual Chicago Southland Dragon Boat Festival. The City of Blue Island boasts that Fay's Point is the place for the whole family to spend their day, whether you are paddling in the event or watching the competition.

Each team accommodates 20 paddlers, one drummer and one steersperson. The drummer sits in the bow (front) of the boat and beats a drum to keep the 20 paddlers in sync with one another. The steersperson stands in the stern (back) and directs the boat with a 10-foot oar that acts as a rudder. "Bringing in a unique event like the Chicago Southland Dragon Boat Festival shows the flexibility and creativity the Chicago Southland has," said Jim Garrett, President / CEO for the Chicago Southland CVB. "Fay's Point is the perfect location for the competition; it showcases not only Blue Island but the iconic steel bridges that overlook the Cal-Sag Channel."

Often dubbed as a "canoe on steroids", dragon boats are 43' in length and don a traditional dragon head and

tail. This ancient Chinese sport has become a fierce competition throughout the world and is growing rapidly in the Southeast and Midwest United States. "Our ultimate goal is to attract more people back to the waterfront of Blue Island," said Domingo Vargas, Mayor for the City of Blue Island. "The Chicago Southland Dragon Boat Festival is a great event to showcase the intrinsic beauty Blue Island offers."

The event organizer, Pan Am Dragon Boat has registration fees posted on their website. Corporate team entries are \$1200, non-profit organizations can enter a team for \$800 with 501(c)3 status and youth team entries (12 yrs – 18 yrs) are \$600. All of the proceeds from concession sales will benefit the Blue Island Arts Alliance, a non-profit organization designed to connect the community through art. Entry is as low as \$23 per person. Teams interested in entering the races can find more information online at PanAmDragonBoat.com or by contacting Pan Am Dragon Boat at 813-569-1030.



Frontline Training



The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau recently completed another successful Front Line Training! With over 14 people in attendance at the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau's office in Lansing, the seminar aimed to create stronger employees armed with information about the Chicago Southland and customer service tips.

With front line employees being vital to the hospitality industry, it is important that we as a collective group put our best foot forward and give every person we encounter the "red carpet treatment of hospitality."

Staff Retreat



On February 24th, 2016 the staff of the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau held their annual staff retreat at the Country Inn & Suites – Matteson. "It is great to pull the staff together once a year to discuss how we can improve our impact on tourism to the Chicago Southland," said Jim Garrett, President / CEO for the Chicago Southland CVB. "It is great to be a part of such an intelligent, dedicated and hardworking staff."

CSCVB Hosts Travel Writer



In 2015, the Chicago Southland CVB marketing team attended Travel Media Showcase in Bloomington, IN. Our objective for the conference was to showcase everything the Chicago Southland has to offer to the various travel writers.

Recently, we had the pleasure of hosting Lisa Lubin (pictured above, right), a three time Emmy award winning journalist as she toured the Chicago Southland. During her stay, she visited La Banque Hotel and La Voûte Bistro + Bar, Harvest Room, Flossmoor Station Restaurant & Brewery, Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park and the Beverly Arts Center.

Thank you to all our members who participated!

Getting Social at the CVB



The Chicago Southland CVB recently hosted a Social Media Engagement Seminar at our offices in Lansing.

Over 10 municipalities learned about the intricacies of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Attendees also learned how to better utilize these tools for the success of their municipalities by keeping their residents informed and to have positive social media outreach.

“Social media marketing is constantly evolving and it is our goal to empower our restaurants, hotels, municipalities and venues to keep up with the changes to better promote the Chicago Southland,” said Kristen Bonk, Social Media & Events Manager.

Lobby Days



Jim Garrett, President / CEO for the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau recently attended Destination Capitol Hill to discuss tourism in the Chicago Southland. “My goal is to inform our law makers on what a tremendous effort our municipalities, restaurants, attractions and hotels put towards tourism,” said Jim Garrett.

You're Invited!

Flannel up for some fun!

**National Tourism Day
Business After Hours**
with the Chicago Southland CVB & local area Chambers of Commerce

Meet Professional Lumberjacks!

Chicago Southland
Convention & Visitors Bureau

5:00PM - 7:30PM

Wednesday 11 May

Chicago Southland CVB Offices
2304 173rd Street, Lansing

For more information, call
Kristen at 708-895-8200

Networking!
Silent Auction!

Food!
Refreshments!



2304 173rd Street
Lansing, IL 60438
VisitChicagoSouthland.com

PRESORT STANDARD
AUTO
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LANSING, IL
PERMIT NO. 170

The Chicago Southland CVB Welcomes New Members

AT THE OFFICE
sports bar & grill

At The Office Sports Bar & Grill
708-388-5520
4901 Cal-Sag Road, Crestwood
AtOfficeSportsBarGrill.com



Bohemian Joe's
708-462-2884
17940 Torrence Avenue, Lansing
BoJoes.com

Lotton Art Glass
Gallery & Studios

Lotton Art Glass Gallery & Studios
708-672-1400
24760 South Country Lane, Crete
LottonArtGlass.com



Mindy's Ribs
708-479-4700
9610 West 191st Street, Mokena
MindysRibs.net



Side Street American Tavern
708-928-8080
18401 North Creek Drive, Tinley Park
SideStreetTavern.com



Andy's Frozen Custard
708-598-0535
8041 Harlem Avenue, Burbank
708-499-1400
9507 South Cicero Avenue, Oak Lawn
EatAndys.com