

Report to the Community

Anderson Madison County Visitors Bureau



Anderson
Madison County
Visitors Bureau

Mission

To promote and develop the programs and means to promote and encourage conferences, trade shows, festivals, events and other tourism and tourist resources and facilities within Madison County, Indiana.

Governance Statement

The Bureau has a twelve-member Board of Directors.

An Executive Committee composed of Officers of the Bureau oversee the day-to-day working of the Bureau with the approval of the Board of Directors.

The Executive Committee of the Bureau meets each month on the second Thursday.

The Executive Committee is empowered by our By-laws with the authority of the Board of Directors between Board of Directors meetings.

The Board of Directors is elected each year from the membership, by the membership, at the annual meeting held between the 15th day of January and the 15th day of February.

The Board of Directors has the final authority to manage the Bureau, establish budgets, enter into contracts, and approve policies established by the Executive Committee.

Bureau Staff

Executive Director - Mark Thacker

Director of Marketing - Maureen Lambert

Office Manager - Esther Cleary

Social Media Coordinator - Ali Adams

Tourism Specialist - Cheryl Shank

Anderson Madison County Visitor Bureau Leadership

Board of Directors

Donovan Archer Robin Gerhart Mike Latchaw Patty Lovins Paul Miller
Joe Morgan Lisa Oakley Chad Renbarger Terry Taylor Linda Wallace Mike Ward

Officers

Chair - Robin Gerhart

Vice-Chair - Joe Morgan

Secretary - Mike Latchaw

Treasurer - Paul Miller

Honorary Directors

Ann Marie Bauer

Mark Lamey

George Vinson

Retiring Directors

Mike Latchaw

Mike Ward

Commission

Scott Crossley Rick Fulaytar Skye Huff Chelsie Jaramillo

Patrick Rice Darla Sallee Marj Shell

Officers

President

Marj Shell

Secretary

Scott Crossley

Vice President

Skye Huff

Treasurer

Rick Fulaytar

A Message from the Chair - Robin Van Camp Gerhart

Despite the crisis and changes that began in 2020 and continue today, the Anderson Madison County Visitors Bureau Staff and Board of Directors remain steadfast and determined to our mission of encouraging, growing, and supporting tourism in Anderson and Madison County.

2021 began with an aggressive and extensive search for a new Executive Director. In March, the Board's Search Committee presented candidate Mark Thacker to the Board of Directors for nomination. The Anderson Madison County Visitors Bureau Board of Directors unanimously approved Mark as the Executive Director to lead the Bureau into the future.

The Board of Directors, Executive Director, and Staff continued in a plan to be ready and ahead of a very cautious and apprehensive population that was anxious to resume a life that had been drastically changed by the pandemic. We expanded our vision to include not only the outside persons coming into Madison County, but also our residents. That strategic plan included the addition of a full time Social Media Coordinator and a part time Tourism Specialist to reinforce our already knowledgeable and hardworking staff. Virtual meetings, training seminars, and collaboration with the travel and tourism field locally and statewide were continued and expanded. Our Staff met the planning and promotional needs for successful renewal and creation of fairs, festivals, and events in the county. The Grant Committee resumed financial funding to existing and new events.

As members of our Board of Directors began transitioning off due to term limits and life changes, the new members selected were a more diverse cross section of our county including, race, culture, gender, age, and education. We are committed to offering a broad view of Anderson and Madison County to our residents and visitors.

My term as Chair of the Board of Directors is ending with our Annual Business Meeting this month. Many changes have occurred within our world, local communities, the Bureau, and the Board of Directors during 2020 and 2021. Two thoughts I have focused on and continue to hold onto are- THANKFUL and EXCITED. I am THANKFUL for the wise and committed Staff, Board of Directors, Commission, and community governments who care deeply for the progress of Madison County and EXCITED for the opportunities and possibilities to heal and promote better times for all, now and in the future.

A Message from Our Executive Director - Mark Thacker

2021... What a Year!

Change can be daunting... to best it, change must be embraced. 2021 began with co-interim executive directors leading through the first quarter. In that short timeframe we tackled another wave of COVID-19, office building challenges, the reworking of budgets, staff morale, new board member orientation, personnel handbook updates, the formalizing of the Bureau's corporate name, and a plethora of administrative paperwork. The term "baptism by fire" comes to mind as I recall this period. The Board of Directors appointed a search committee to find and select a new Executive Director and after interviewing numerous candidates, I was selected. After more than 13 years at Harrah's Hoosier Park Racing and Casino, the time had come to embrace a new path.

The Visitors Bureau is very fortunate to have an incredible staff. Maureen Lambert has managed all marketing efforts, from group travel to leisure markets and more, for 25 years. Esther Cleary for the past 18 years has managed the office and all financials, working closely with our accounting firm and auditors. Ali Adams was hired as a part-time Social Media Coordinator in March and was brought on as full-time staff in June overseeing social media, the website, and monthly newsletter. June also saw the part-time hiring of Cheryl Shank who manages our festival and fair relationships, including membership in the Indiana State Festival Association, acts as liaison to the grant committee and writes for our industry publications. The staff works well as a team, supporting and challenging each other.

As a group, each staff member is challenged to increase their visibility in the county by attending meetings, doing presentations, and participating with our fairs, festivals, attractions, and events. We collaborate with the Chambers, Economic Development entities, and city, town, and county administrations. We approached some community members that stated, "we've never had anyone approach us before." We engage in local, regional, and state marketing and tourism associations to better define our path and add our voices to larger discussions. Internally, 2021 was an opportunity to change, grow, and diversify.

Due to COVID-19, we began 2021 with a very limited budget. We learned in conversations with sister Bureaus that many were down more than 60% in Innkeeper's revenues; a couple of them permanently closed their doors. March presented yet another wave of COVID infections which rightly concerned the planning of our 2021 events and attractions. However, only one, the Lapel Village Fair, canceled their event; all others pushed back their dates, but continued with their plans.

In early April we realized a resurgence of Innkeeper's income which continued as the year progressed. We were able to re-forecast our mid-year budgets to afford more promotion and community support. What began in April, to our surprise, resulted in a record year for Innkeeper's revenue. Without an incredible staff, amazing events, and attractions throughout the county, engaged Board of Directors and Commission members, and countless community advocates, this banner year would not have been possible. Note too, that this was accomplished without the revenue from one of our major hoteliers and with the closing of Pine Lakes.

Moving forward...

I once had a supervisor tell me, "The easy part is done – the talking." We exerted a lot of effort having many discussions this past year. Those efforts were only the beginning. We must and will continue to meet with city, town, and county administrations to further develop strong, productive, and cohesive relationships. Collaboration will grow with existing and new partnerships and those partnerships must become more diverse to serve all segments of our population. To that end, the Visitors Bureau, along with the Board of Directors will create and put into policy a diversity and inclusion statement to enable us to better serve all our constituencies.

Great things are on the horizon! We are projecting another banner year of revenue with the return to normal business for one of our hotels and a new owner and operator of the former Pine Lakes. Uranus Fudge will officially open in early 2022 and bring their enthusiasm to Madison County. One of two new Anderson hotels will begin construction this year, as we work with other county stakeholders on further hotel interests. Sports, such a mainstay in Madison County, will see a new initiative to bring awareness to Madison County's sports venues in hopes of attracting more tournaments. The Grant Committee has been re-activated to support our non-profit attractions that help drive tourism and bring to Anderson and Madison County out of county guests. Efforts are also being made to participate in the inaugural Indiana Tourism Academy, as well as attain board memberships within the Indiana Tourism Association and the Indiana State Festival Association, all this while have continuing leadership in East Region Tourism and Marketing Cooperative and Indiana Foodways Alliance.

Indeed, the future is bright and full of opportunity, and when opportunity is presented will be acted upon.

Marketing Plan for 2022 - Maureen Lambert

In 2021, our marketing plan faced many challenges as we addressed the Bureau's marketing programs and re-instituted the grant program. The 2021 revenue from Innkeepers Tax, the Bureau's primary funding source, grew 31% overall compared to 2020. With the growth of revenue, we updated our website, www.visitandersonmadisoncounty.com, created our first Madison County Wedding Guide publication, and by the end of December 2021, the Madison County Visitors Guide was ready for distribution.

The first quarter of 2022, our Bureau team, Bureau Commission and Bureau Board of Directors will be working with Don Anderson, Destination Consultancy Group, on the following: Destination Assessment, Strategic Destination and Destination Marketing Planning. The preparation, SWOT Analyses, research analyses will formulate a multi-year strategic plan initiative for 2022-2024.

The 2022 marketing focus will continue with cooperative efforts on the leisure, sports, culinary markets, and with our community festivals and events throughout the year. Networking opportunities will keep our presence in the sports market and the group market. The Bureau will retain memberships in the American Bus Association, Circle Wisconsin, and Group Travel Family Group Marketplaces. The leisure market has opened their marketplace events, with our office attending the AAA Pittsburgh Travel Showcase, Chicago Travel & Adventure Show and AAA Louisville Vacation Expo.

The creation of the Grant Program gives our local non-profit groups an opportunity for the Bureau to assist them in their marketing efforts to enhance their festivals and events throughout Madison County.

We continue to work closely with our hoteliers in the areas of promotion and packaging relating to quality and service. The Bureau subscribes to the STR (Short Term Rental) and Air DNA Reports. Our STR weekly subscription report tracks the impact on hotel performance in our location and surrounding areas. Air DNA (short term rental analytics on Airbnb's, Vrbo) sent out monthly, reports on tracking of our Madison County Airbnb market. We continue with our own market analysis report that checks average daily rate and percentage of occupancy on nine hotels. Looking at data gives us the opportunity to see future trends of room rental in Madison County.

Sporting events are making a strong return and offer our county a strong economic impact from overnight guests. The Little League Girls Softball Regional Tournament had canceled last year due to the pandemic and is now scheduled to take place in July. The tournament will be hosting 12 teams, coaches, umpires, and parents. Play will take place at various baseball/softball fields in Anderson and Pendleton.

The United States Bowling Congress (USBC) takes place at Championship Lanes with the tournament running from the beginning of February every weekend thru the first week of May. Other events scheduled include Harrah's Hoosier Park Dan Patch Sweepstakes, the Little 500 and Redbud 400 Races at Anderson Speedway. We will continue to work with organizers of these and other sports events. Our Bureau is aware how these events impact our local economy and the revenue from Innkeepers Tax.

The Bureau is promoting our Festivals, Fairs and Events in the 2022 Indiana State Festival Guide, website, Instagram, and Facebook. The Discover Magazine features 4 issues: Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter. Our Visitors Center remains open Monday through Friday and on Saturday, our foyer is open to those wanting local and state publications.

Our social media presence has grown with the addition of our Social Media Coordinator, Ali Adams. We have gained followers on Facebook and Instagram and have created content on TikTok. Our website is up to date with new content and photos.

The Bureau maintains its regional and state marketing efforts, with membership in the East Region Tourism Marketing Cooperative (ERTMC), Indiana Foodways Alliance (IFA), Indiana Glass Trail, Indiana State Festival Association, and bureaus throughout the state of Indiana. We are working with alliances in surrounding states' local bureaus to offer a simple and cohesive way to develop our attractions, shopping, and restaurants as visitors pass through our East-Central Region.

We are working closely with the Indiana Tourism Association (ITA), Indiana Destination Development Corporation (IDDC), and Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI). These memberships provide Bureau staff a base of support and professional development opportunities. The need to work together as a coalition is essential. With proposed and pending legislation impacting the tourism industry, we continue to maintain a strong working relationship to assure a united voice within the industry.

The balance of the Bureau's marketing efforts for 2022 will be in conjunction with relationships with county-wide businesses, civic organizations, and residents in our community to assist us in promoting Madison County Tourism

The staff is always prepared for the opportunities that come our way. Challenges abound and we are diligent in making the necessary adjustments to ensure a positive economic impact through tourism in Madison County.



SITE ACTIVITY Benchmark

Jun 1, 2021 - Dec 31, 2021

All Users
100.00% Sessions

Avg. Session Duration

00:00:53

Avg for View: 00:00:53 (0.00%)



Pageviews

24,133

% of Total: 100.00% (24,133)



Bounce Rate (% of single-page sess...

74.90%

Avg for View: 74.90% (0.00%)



Pages/Session

1.50

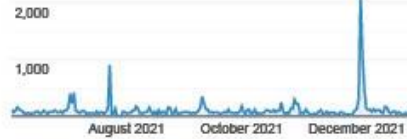
Avg for View: 1.50 (0.00%)



Pageviews

● Pageviews

3,000



Bounce Rate by Medium

Medium	Bounce Rate
social	94.74%
referral	78.54%
organic	73.89%

Avg. Time on Page

00:01:45

Avg for View: 00:01:45 (0.00%)



Outbound Links Clicked On (Events)

Event Action	Total Events	Unique Dimension Combinations
click	323	254

Unique Pageviews (a return to a pg remains 1 pgvi...

19,880

% of Total: 100.00% (19,880)



Avg. Page Load Time (sec) by Brow...

Browser	Avg. Page Load Time (sec)
Android Webview	5.85
Safari (in-app)	5.23
Chrome	4.93
Safari	4.47
Samsung Internet	3.39
Edge	3.22
Internet Explorer	2.56

Unique Pageviews/Bounce Rate by Page

Page	Unique Pageviews	Bounce Rate
/calendar-of-events/	3,503	84.92%
/	3,292	41.58%
/nights-of-lights/	1,304	88.98%
/contact-us/	483	75.15%
/eat/	325	65.88%
/event-location/dickmann-town-center/	274	76.00%
/events/fire-it-up-on-the-4th-harras-hoosier-park/	272	89.67%
/about-us/	261	83.72%
/events/fall-creek-heritage-fair/	219	81.69%
/events/jeeps-on-meridian-2021-dickman-town-center/	217	81.86%

% Exit by Page (Last page before ex...

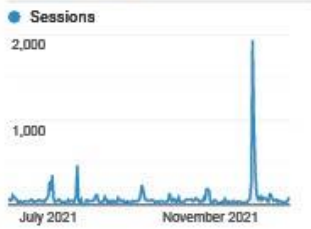
Page	Pageviews	% Exit
/	4,560	46.05%
/calendar-of-events/	4,091	75.80%
/nights-of-lights/	1,446	88.31%
/contact-us/	569	59.40%
/eat/	532	37.22%
/event-location/dickmann-town-center/	332	70.78%
/events/fire-it-up-on-the-4th-harras-hoosier-park/	303	88.45%
/about-us/	301	52.82%
/blog/	284	17.25%
/things-to-do/	278	33.09%

VISITORS Benchmark

Jun 1, 2021 - Dec 31, 2021

All Users
100.00% Sessions

Sessions (Visits)



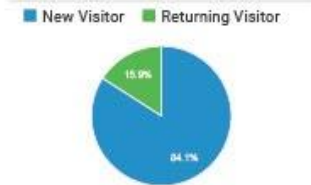
Sessions (Visits)



Unique Users (Visitors)



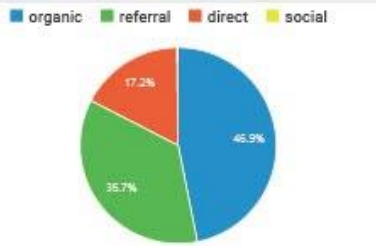
Sessions by User Type



Sessions by Region

Region	Sessions	% New Sessions
Indiana	11,069	81.72%
Illinois	1,466	86.49%
Michigan	276	85.14%
Ohio	264	91.67%
Texas	188	87.23%
California	153	90.20%
North Carolina	151	93.38%
Virginia	141	97.87%
Florida	127	92.13%
Kentucky	91	89.01%

Sessions by Channel (Traffic Type)



Sessions by Keyword (Organic Search)

Keyword	Sessions
visi Better than reCAPTCHA : vaptch a.net	18
visi Better than reCAPTCHA : vaptch a.net	11
visi Better than reCAPTCHA: vaptcha.net	9
site:www.visitandersonmadisoncount y.com	5
anderson madison county visitors bure au	2
frankton heritage days 2021	2
hoosier park anderson fireworks 2021	2
anderson indiana jeeps on meridian	1
celtic angels anderson indiana	1
chesterfield airport fireworks	1

Sessions by Source (Referral)

Source	Sessions	% New Sessions
m.facebook.com	3,144	94.69%
lm.facebook.com	1,288	92.62%
l.facebook.com	382	60.47%
Visit Indiana	228	76.32%
facebook.com	96	97.92%
andersontownpowwow.org	37	86.49%
linktr.ee	29	79.31%
amcvb.flywheelsites.com	24	0.00%
andersonin.makerfaire.com	14	28.57%
aroundindy.com	13	84.62%

Sessions by Browser

Browser	Sessions	Pages / Session
Chrome	5,552	1.73
Safari	4,278	1.36
Safari (in-app)	2,949	1.14
Android Webview	1,553	1.24
Edge	739	2.72

Sessions by Device

Device Category	Sessions	Pages / Session
mobile	11,780	1.33
desktop	3,881	2.04
tablet	385	1.42

Sessions by Mobile Device Info

Mobile Device Info	Sessions	Pages / Session
Apple iPhone	5,797	1.27
Apple iPhone XR	356	1.10
Samsung SM-G960 U Galaxy S9	152	1.60
Samsung SM-G991 U Galaxy S21 5G	150	1.43
Apple iPad	140	1.41

Social Media Analytics:

- Facebook (June 1-December 31)
 - Page reach: 142,206
 - New page likes: 359
 - Top posts:
 - § Nights of Lights – 52.2K reach
 - § 4-H Fair – 28.4K reach
 - § 4th of July – 21.5K reach
 - § Powwow – 19.4K reach
 - § Elwood Glass Festival – 15.5K reach
 - § SoulFest – 8.9K reach

Instagram (September 1-December 31)

- Impressions: 65,789
- Followers gained: 105
- Top posts:
 - § Paramount video – 14K views
 - § Ball of Paint – 13.1K views

Biggest Accomplishments:

- Video content through Instagram Reels & TikTok
- Blogs that drive traffic from social media to the website

Anderson Madison County Visitors Bureau, Inc.

Profit and Loss YTD Comparison

December 2021

	TOTAL	
	DEC 2021	JAN - DEC 2021 (YTD)
Income		
2999 Support and Revenue		
3005 Commission Contract	43,750.00	500,000.00
3010 Special Commission Allocation		52,853.32
3040 Grant Income		64,241.01
Total 2999 Support and Revenue	43,750.00	616,894.33
3080 Bridal Guide Promotional Sales	1,050.00	7,700.00
Total Income	\$44,800.00	\$624,594.33
GROSS PROFIT	\$44,800.00	\$624,594.33
Expenses		
5009 Promotional Expenses		
5100 Salaried/Hourly Employees	28,838.83	235,613.22
5110 Employer Payroll Taxes	2,206.16	18,519.56
5120 Employee Benefits	23,783.00	27,914.54
5130 Printed Materials		2,434.51
5140 Web Site/Home Page		11,646.17
5170 Meetings/Conventions	473.27	5,903.40
5180 Sporting Events		4,000.00
5190 Misc Promotional Material	1,132.87	13,402.01
5200 Travel Promotions		3,452.58
5210 Festivals, Fairs, & Events	-100.00	2,350.00
5220 Sponsorship	4,250.00	45,590.00
5225 Grants	8,500.00	12,000.00
5230 Tourism/Visitor		317.13
5240 Telephone	513.04	7,039.92
5340 Postage		2,824.15
5400 Marketing (Advertising)	13,008.94	58,572.50
5450 Community Relations		578.59
5500 Promotional Travel	138.85	994.11
5510 Dues & Subscriptions	9,592.69	23,252.65
Total 5009 Promotional Expenses	90,307.55	476,205.04
6009 Operational Expenses		
6200 Maintenance & Repairs	3,617.25	59,406.03
6225 Computer Maintenance	535.62	5,290.13
6250 Vehicle Maintenance & Repairs		1,935.19
6260 1931 Ford Model A Huckster		357.00
6300 Office Supplies	611.44	7,702.59
6350 Equipment Leases		3,853.02
6460 Utilities	1,221.75	13,113.44
6600 Insurance - Property		5,730.15
TOTAL		
	DEC 2021	JAN - DEC 2021 (YTD)
6700 Equipment Purchases	10,549.69	28,999.32
Total 6009 Operational Expenses	16,535.75	126,366.67
7009 Administration Expenses		
7400 Professional Fees	147.11	3,495.33
7500 Audit Expense		15,675.00
7800 Meeting Expense	93.31	1,724.98
Total 7009 Administration Expenses	240.42	20,895.31
Total Expenses	\$107,083.72	\$623,467.22
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$ -62,283.72	\$1,107.11
NET INCOME	\$ -62,283.72	\$1,107.11

President's Award Recipients

1984 – Bill Herbig and Dr. Tim Lee

1985 – Mary Lou Aynes

1986 – Annie Barnett

1988 – Larry Lutz

1989 – Larry Contos/Dixie Contos-Wilson of
Pay Less Super Markets, Inc.

1990 – Women's Bowling Association,
Men's Bowling Association, Young
American Bowling Alliance

1991 – Cooper's Sport Bowl and East Side
Lanes

1992 – Anderson University

1993 – Anderson Herald-Bulletin

1994 – Hoosier Park at Anderson

1995 – Paramount Heritage Foundation

1996 – Historical Military Armor Museum

1997 – Larry Swick

1998 – Gruenewald Historic Home

1999 – Morris McCurdy

2000 – Millcreek Civic Center

2001 – Anderson Speedway

2002 – Gaither Family Resources

2003 – "The Giant" Earth Home

2004 – Mounds State Park

2005 – Anderson Center for the Arts

2006 – Good's Candy Shop

2007 – Anderson Symphony Orchestra

2008 – Hoosier Park Racing and Casino

2009 – The Professional Development
Center

2010 – Myron Baumer & the Madison
County Art Association

2011 – Joe Rice

2012 – Lynzi Scharton and Levi Rinker

2013 – Mike Kase

2014 – Dale Pickett

2015 – Anderson University Colts Camp

2016 – Anderson Speedway

2017 – Ted Tapp

2018 – A-Town Center

2019 – Deb Stapleton and The Paramount
Theatre Center

2020 – St. Vincent's Regional Hospital,
Anderson; St. Vincent's Mercy Hospital,
Elwood; Community Hospital of Anderson

Volunteer of the Year Recipients

1987 – Betty Land

1988 – Phil Johnson

1989 – Bob Sherman

1990 – Barbara Armstrong

1991 – Debi Neale

1992 – Arnold Gold

1993 – Patti Garr

1994 – Bob Sherman

1995 – Ron Ruby

1996 – Paul Baroni

1997 – Morris McCurdy

1998 – Martha Carmichael

1999 – Cheryl Shank

2000 – John Bertacchi

2001 – Mark Lamey

2002 – Marj Shell

2003 – Francis Howe

2004 – Judy Asbury

2005 - Tim Thomas

2006 – Richard Fulaytar

2007 – Linda Shelton

2008 – Robin Gerhart

2009 – Dottie Payne

2010 – Patty Kuhn

2011 – Tammy Knox

2012 – Cheryl Pattat

2013 – Tammy Bowman

2014 – Heather Bremer

2015 – Mike Latchaw and Bobby Graves

2016 – Jeff Bryan

2017 – Bill Watson

2018 – George Vinson

2019 – Betty Land and Mark Lamey

2020 – Jerrod, Jason, and Lisa Oakley and the Oakley Brothers Employees



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