

# CELEBRATING THE POWER OF TOURISM

GREATER  
**FOX**  
CITIES  
APPLETON WI

NATIONAL  
**TRAVEL &**  
**TOURISM**  
WEEK MAY 5-11, 2019



## A Year of New Beginnings

There's always a sense of excitement when you start something new. You feel the sense of accomplishment that goes along with meeting your goal. In 2018, just as the Fox Cities Exhibition Center entered its first year of operation and began to drive tourism, we experienced another new beginning: Construction began on the Community First Champion Center Fox Cities. The 164,000 square foot facility will be the premier indoor sports tourism complex in the Mid-west. It will feature a year-round ice rink, a field-house with courts for volleyball and basketball, and a seasonal arena that can be converted to an ice rink or additional courts. These facilities are once in a generation projects for the Fox Cities that will drive tourism for many years to come. These two significant tourism assets will surely change the game for the Fox Cities and the Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau.

A number of new hotel projects were also announced, and some completed, in 2018. New development spurred by the potential of these new tourism-generating facilities. By the end of 2019, it is expected the hotel room inventory in the Fox Cities will grow nearly 10%, with more rooms planned for 2020.

While the large projects present incredible opportunities to strengthen the economy of the Fox Cities through tourism, we remain committed to implementing sales, marketing and service initiatives focused on growing visitation in all areas and to all partners.

Our Board and staff came together for a strategic planning session in the Fall of 2018 and grappled with a new beginning of our own: what is the "next big thing" for tourism and the CVB? Simply put,

it's ensuring the success of these new facilities. It's focusing on our core mission of growing the local economy through tourism. It's ensuring we up our game in tourism marketing and sales to project an image worthy of these investments. It means a new logo, new website, new graphics and a new brand direction. Plenty of new beginnings.

The CVB's Tourism Development Grant program also supported a number of new beginnings in 2018. A total of \$444,142 in grant dollars were paid out, with another \$330,000 committed to projects. Our grants fueled a new Nature Center at Bubolz Nature Preserve, two new trestle bridges in Neenah and Menasha - helping to complete the Loop the Lake, a new exhibit at the History Museum at the Castle, new signage at the Building for Kids Children's Museum and several new visitor information kiosks.

We would like to thank the CVB's Board of Directors, committees and staff, along with our municipal, hotel and other tourism business partners for the role they played in our successes this year. We gratefully accept your financial and vocal support and look forward to working with you on future opportunities, challenges and new beginnings.



by Pam Seidl  
Executive Director



James Fenton  
2018 Board Chair



### INSIDE

2018 Year in Review

Inspired by the Thrill  
of Victory: Community  
First Champion Center  
Fox Cities

Fox Cities -- IN THE NEWS

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# 2018 YEAR IN REVIEW

The Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau is an economic development organization that strengthens the Fox Cities by attracting visitors in the convention, sports and leisure markets through sales, marketing and destination development.

## GROUP SALES



Meeting and convention events



Room nights



Direct visitor spending



Future meeting and convention events



Future estimated room nights



Future estimated direct visitor spending

## VISITOR SERVICES



Provided services to



**VOLUNTEER HOURS**

## SPORTS MARKETING



Sporting events



Estimated room nights



Estimated direct visitor spending



Future sporting events



Future estimated room nights



Future estimated direct visitor spending

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#ExploreFoxCities [FoxCities.org](http://FoxCities.org)



# THE FUN TIMES



## WHY TRAVEL MATTERS

Did you know that tourism is Wisconsin's third largest industry? It generates more than \$21.6 billion in revenue each year and achieves a Return on Investment of 7 to 1: \$7 in tax revenue per \$1 promotional spend. Every resident and out-of-state visitor who travels throughout Wisconsin invests their dollars right back into our roads, education, healthcare and agriculture.

We pass popular tourist sites every day, but we might not always think of how it supports our community. From our state parks and waterparks to our historic sites and museums, tourist attractions are the backbone of Wisconsin. These places define our community, provide our families with jobs and have given us—and the millions of people who traveled to and within Wisconsin—a lifetime of memories.

Travel matters and it improves Wisconsin in ways that have a wide-reaching impact on local residents. Travel has a positive effect on the economy in each of our 72 counties, and it has an impact that we don't always see: it can strengthen families, foster hometown pride, and build bridges that connect us with one another.

Travel also opens us up to new experiences. That's why we've created the Wisconsin Curiosity Challenge. The challenge encourages residents to explore new places and become immersed in the history and culture found right here in our state.

The challenge is simple: go someplace new and send a postcard to Travel Wisconsin summarizing your travels and what you learned on the journey. We also encourage you to use #curiouswi on your social media channels during your travels.

This week is National Travel & Tourism Week, and we encourage you to join us in celebrating the way travel matters to each and every one of us. We look forward to seeing the many ways you're exploring Wisconsin.

### WISCONSIN CURIOSITY CHALLENGE

#### Step 1: Travel

Is there a place in Wisconsin that has been on your bucket list for years? How about a county you've never visited? Now's the time to make it happen.

#### Step 2: Explore

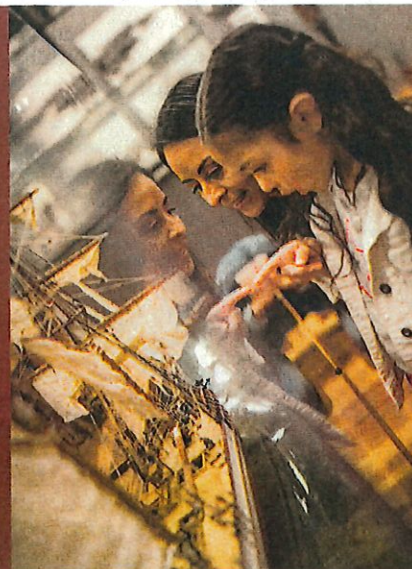
Take it all in!

#### Step 3: Share

Send a postcard to Travel Wisconsin\* telling us what you saw, learned and loved about your trip. While you're at it, share it on social media using #curiouswi.

#### Step 4: Repeat

\*Send postcards to Travel Wisconsin at:  
PO Box 8690  
Madison, WI 53708-8690





# POWER OF TOURISM IN WISCONSIN

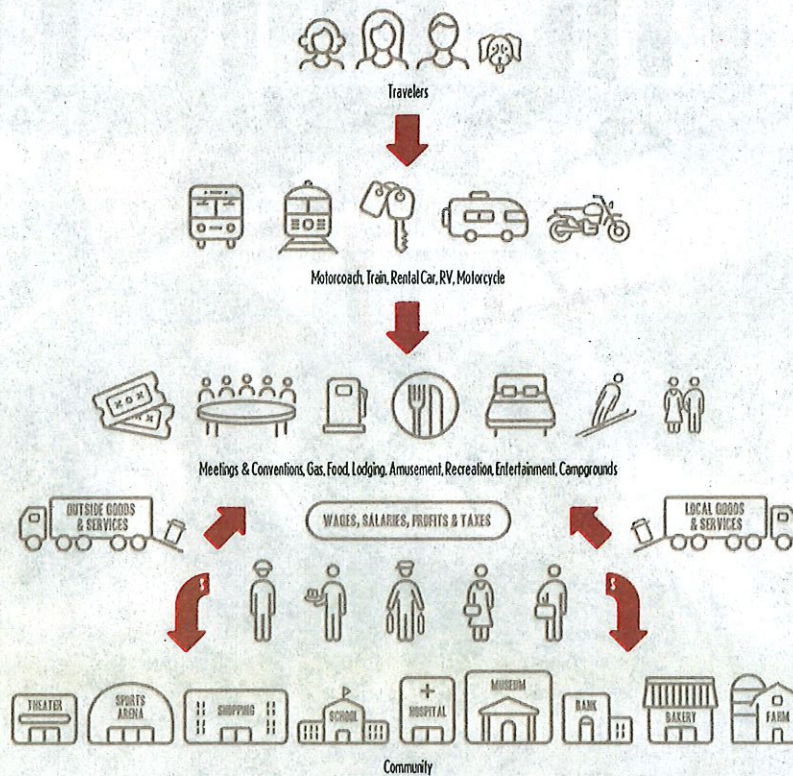
## WISCONSIN'S CREATIVE ECONOMY: HOW THE ARTS AND CULTURE DRIVE TOURISM

Next time you're looking for an affordable afternoon getaway, consider a museum.

Museums are more than a home for pieces of art, they're places of cultural preservation and learning. Chances are, you'll find one in your very own backyard. Through the hustle and bustle of our daily lives, we might temporarily forget where we've come from, but museums never will.

In addition to cultural and historical enrichment, museums mean big bucks to our economy. The arts and cultural industries – which include museums – brought in \$9.7 billion to the state's economy and employed more than 94,000 workers in 2016. Did you know that nearly 10,000 businesses in Wisconsin are involved in the creation or distribution of the arts? With their unique artifacts and eccentric themes, museums pull tourists throughout the state of Wisconsin and increase visitors to the communities in which they are located.

Wisconsin is lucky to be home to hundreds of treasured museums. More than 400 museums and galleries are highlighted on [TravelWisconsin.com](http://TravelWisconsin.com), with exhibits that feature everything from motorcycles and mustard to aviation and accordions from all corners of the state.



## HOW TOURISM DOLLARS ARE CIRCULATED THROUGH THE STATE'S ECONOMY

Traveler spending is re-circulated back into Wisconsin's economy and benefits other related industries, such as construction, technology, agriculture, food processing and other service industries. This spending also generates tax revenues, which help pay for our roads, schools, programs for veterans, the disabled and elderly and more. Plus, traveler spending helps support shopping and historical areas, art galleries, museums and many cultural and community events.

## TOURISM MEANS JOBS

Think back to your first job. Maybe you worked at a local restaurant, your community zoo or spent summers working at a nearby waterpark. For many—one third of Americans to be exact—travel is the front door to a promising career. According to the U.S. Travel Association, Americans whose first job in travel have an average career salary of \$81,900, and two in five of those whose first job was in travel are now earning more than \$100,000.

Travel-dependent leisure and hospitality is the largest small business employer in the U.S. Right here in Wisconsin, tourism supports 199,000 jobs. These thousands of jobs supported by visitors spending would provide jobs for every resident of Racine County—the

fifth largest county in the state. A study by Tourism Economics shows that traveler spending in Wisconsin generated \$1.6 billion in state and local tax revenue in 2018, and that without tourism, each Wisconsin household would pay an additional \$680 to maintain existing services.

At the national level, travel is critical to the U.S. economy. The U.S. Travel Association also notes that tourism is a leader in workforce development and career advancement, creating and supporting 15.7 million jobs across the U.S.—making it the seventh-largest private sector employer. From construction to marketing to real estate, jobs across Wisconsin—and the country—reap the benefit of a healthy tourism industry.

### WISCO, DID YOU KNOW?

A National Historic Landmark, Milton House Museum was originally a stagecoach inn and boasts a rich history as part of the Underground Railroad.

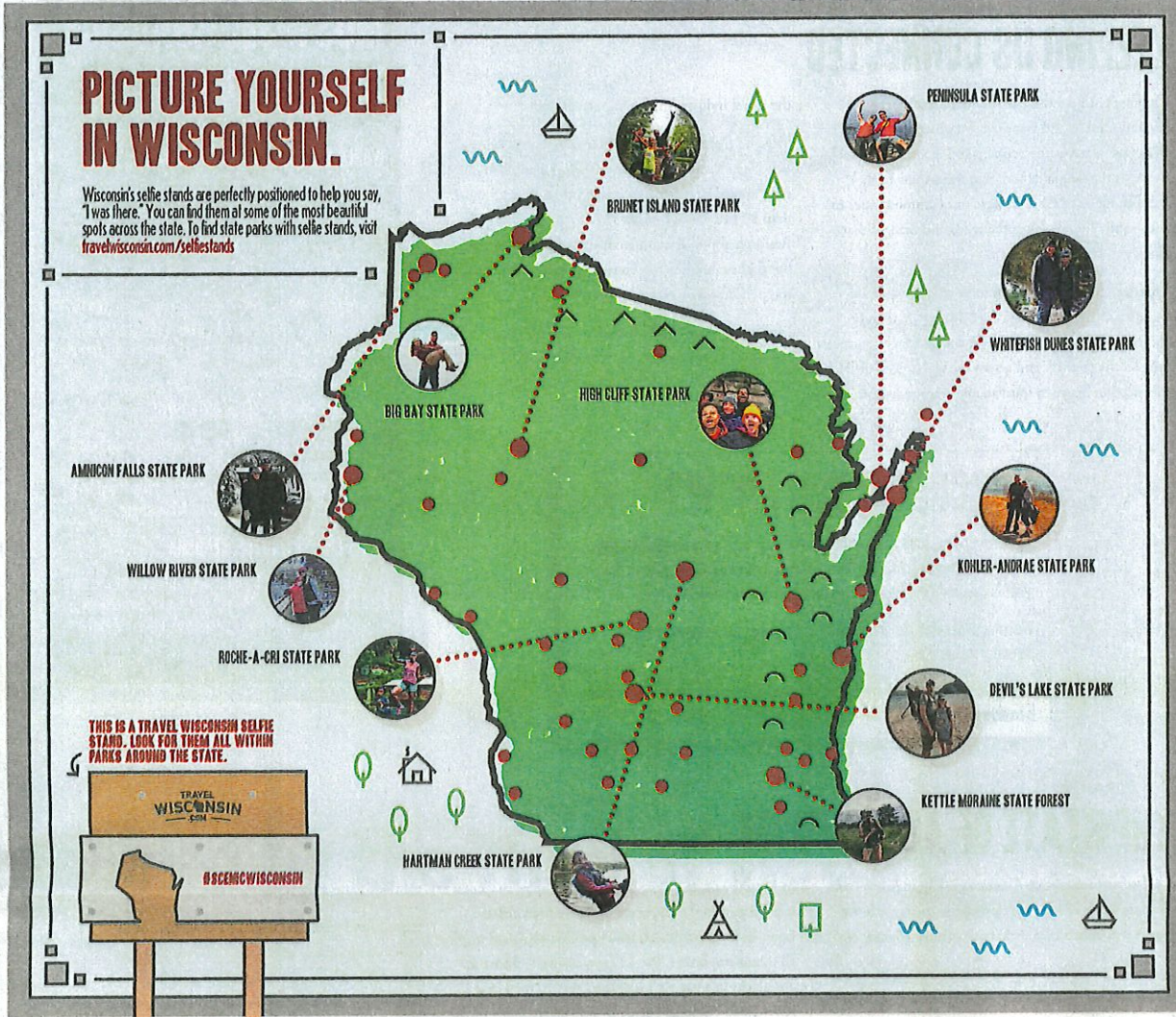
The EAA Aviation Museum in Oshkosh houses one of the most extensive aviation attractions in the world with a stunning collection of more than 200 historic aircraft that chronicle the history of aviation innovation.

The Milwaukee Art Museum holds one of the largest collections of works by Wisconsin native Georgia O'Keeffe.



# PICTURE YOURSELF IN WISCONSIN.

Wisconsin's selfie stands are perfectly positioned to help you say, "I was there." You can find them at some of the most beautiful spots across the state. To find state parks with selfie stands, visit [travelwisconsin.com/selfiestands](http://travelwisconsin.com/selfiestands)



THIS IS A TRAVEL WISCONSIN SELFIE STAND. LOOK FOR THEM ALL WITHIN PARKS AROUND THE STATE.

## WISCONSIN'S OUTDOOR TREASURES

Travelers looking for outdoor adventure, exploration and discovery need not head any further than Wisconsin. The state is filled with National Park Service, National Forest Service and other federally designated areas where quiet waters await paddlers, peaceful forests beckon hikers and scenic byways show off their splendor.

Wisconsin's rich outdoor heritage and abundant natural resources support, uplift and build the state's outdoor recreation industry as a primary driver of tourism. A study by Longwoods International notes that among the marketable reasons people travel to Wisconsin, our

outdoor recreation is the #1 reason why they travel here. Longwoods International also notes in a separate study that Wisconsin has the highest rating among our Midwest peers within our competitor set for destination perception of outdoor recreation activities.

The Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) reports that in Wisconsin, outdoor recreation generates \$17.9 billion in consumer spending annually, resulting in 168,000 direct jobs and \$1.1 billion in state and local tax revenue. What's more, the promotion of outdoor recreation benefits every single one of Wisconsin's 72 counties.

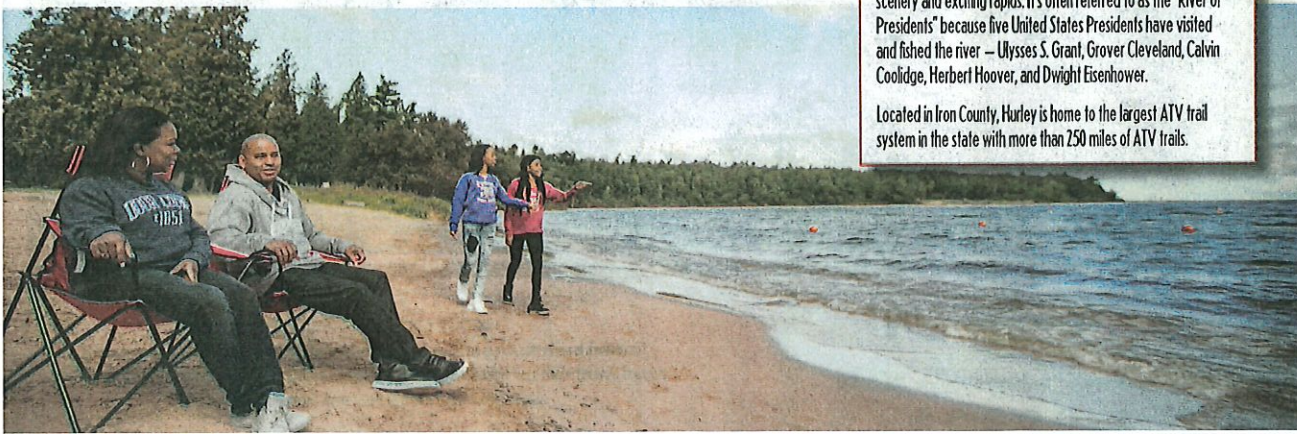
## WISCO, DID YOU KNOW?

The Ice Age National Scenic Trail is a 1,200-mile trail that lies entirely within Wisconsin, and is one of only 11 National Scenic Trails in the country.

Schoolhouse Beach on Washington Island is a geological marvel. Made up of individual limestone pebbles that are smoothed by the waves of Lake Michigan, it's one of only five limestone beaches in the world.

The Bois Brule River in Douglas County is famous for its trout fishing, scenery and exciting rapids. It's often referred to as the "River of Presidents" because five United States Presidents have visited and fished the river — Ulysses S. Grant, Grover Cleveland, Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, and Dwight Eisenhower.

Located in Iron County, Hurley is home to the largest ATV trail system in the state with more than 250 miles of ATV trails.





# POWER OF TOURISM IN WISCONSIN

## KEEPING US CONNECTED

Staying connected is the foundation of our communities and necessary for growing travel in Wisconsin, across the country and around the world. Travel is the definable link that transitions from welcoming travelers to explore our commonalities to the—quite literal—airports, roads and bridges that shape our mobility.

Our nation's transportation infrastructure—made up of roads, airports, highways, bridges, rail and more—enables people to travel and conduct commerce around the country and across the globe. This critical intersection between tourism and transportation is also

the travel industry's most important asset.

Safe and plentiful transportation is key to growing Wisconsin's tourism economy. Visitor arrivals to our state take place primarily through driving, with more than 90 percent of tourists arriving by personal vehicle. Research also indicates a high potential to increase our flight market in Wisconsin, bringing even more travelers across our state borders.

Modern, efficient travel infrastructure facilitates economic growth and competitiveness and improves our quality of life.

## WISCO, DID YOU KNOW?

Wisconsin produces some of the world's finest cheese, winning more awards than any other state or country at the 2018 World Cheese Championship Contest. We're also home to one of only two Master Cheesemaker programs in the world.

Wisconsin is the nation's leading producer of cranberries, harvesting more than 60 percent of the country's crop.

Our state is the nation's leading producer of ginseng. Wisconsin-grown American ginseng is considered the "Gold Standard" thanks to our state's fertile, glaciated soils.

## MUST-SEE ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS

### WORLD'S LARGEST FISH, HAYWARD

The largest building in the town of Hayward is a giant fiberglass musky, also known as the Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame. The musky is four and a half stories tall and as long as a Boeing 757.

### WORLD'S LARGEST SIX PACK, LA CROSSE

Constructed in 1969 by the G. Heileman Brewing Company for inventory storage, the metal tanks were re-designed to look like a six pack of La Crosse Lager. They contain the equivalent of 7,340,796 cans of beer.

### SPUTNIK CRASH SITE, MANITOWOC

September 6, 1962 changed the course of Manitowoc's history when a 20-pound piece of Sputnik IV crash-landed in the middle of the main street. See the preserved crash spot and saved space debris in the nearby Rahr-West Art Museum.

### MARS CHEESE CASTLE, KENOSHA

In a state where cheese is king, it makes perfect sense to store it in a castle. Welcome to Mars Cheese Castle, conveniently located at the state border to stock up on artisan cheese and bags of cheese curds for the road.

## THE STATE OF AG-TOURISM

Wisconsin might be America's Dairyland, but cows are just one way travelers can connect with our state's rich agricultural traditions. Enter: Ag-tourism.

Agricultural tourism lets travelers tour, explore, learn about and participate in everything from cheesemaking to corn mazes. With 68,500 farms on 14.3 million acres, Wisconsin farmers and producers create unique opportunities to showcase exactly what goes into—and comes out of—one of Wisconsin's leading industries.

In Manitowoc, the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center is dedicated to the discovery of where food comes from, how it's produced, who's producing it and why all that is important. Pizza Farms continue to rise in popularity as travelers make their way to the Great River Road National Scenic Byway where many of the farms are concentrated. Farmers' markets are popping up in communities across the state and working-farm experiences are being marketed to travelers looking to

try their hand at farming for a day.

Experiential travel has become a large part of the travel planning process as more visitors look to witness the history, people, culture and food that makes up a destination. Ag-Tourism brings visitors to the forefront of that experience. Learn even more at [TravelWisconsin.com](http://TravelWisconsin.com).



**WISCONSIN**  
— DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM —

[TravelWisconsin.com](http://TravelWisconsin.com) | [tourinfo@travelwisconsin.com](mailto:tourinfo@travelwisconsin.com) | 1-800-432-8747



### ABOUT THE WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM:

Our mission is to market the state as the Midwest's premier travel destination for fun. By executing industry-leading marketing programs, providing reliable travel information and establishing strategic partnerships, we play a significant role in delivering exceptional customer service and generating greater economic impact and jobs for Wisconsin.





# Inspired by the Thrill of Victory

Scheduled to open in the Fall of 2019, the Community First Champion Center Fox Cities will be the premier indoor sports tourism complex in the Midwest.

The 164,000 square foot facility will feature a year-round ice rink with seating for up to 1,000, a fieldhouse with four basketball courts or eight volleyball courts, and a seasonal arena that can be an ice rink or four basketball courts or six volleyball courts.

Located in the thriving retail area of Grand Chute, the Community First Champion Center is conveniently located just minutes from I-41. Within 10 minutes of the facility, visitors will find over 60 restaurants, more than 2,000 team-friendly hotel rooms, and Wisconsin's Best Shopping.

A study commissioned by the Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau demonstrated that the facility will bring an estimated economic impact of up to \$8.9 million in the first year. The focus will be on attracting sports teams from outside the Fox Cities, providing them with the opportunity to participate

in tournaments and events. Local user groups will also have access to the space as the facility will complement other existing venues in the area to help fulfill unmet local needs.

The facility will be funded with room tax dollars collected by 10 Fox Cities municipalities. Including the Town of Grand Chute, the other municipalities are the City of Appleton, Village of Fox Crossing, City of Kaukauna, Village of Kimberly, Village of Little Chute, City of Menasha, City of Neenah, Town of Neenah and the Village of Sherwood.



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# Fox Cities – IN THE NEWS

## CVB Accumulates over \$590,000 in Earned Media

Through the power of the media, the Fox Cities-Greater Appleton area accumulated over \$590k in earned media. Top stories included the opening of the Fox Cities Exhibition Center, groundbreaking for the Community First Champion Center Fox Cities, Mile of Music and other various local events, attractions and exhibits.

## Area Accolades

Not a year goes by that the Fox Cities, or specifically one of the communities, don't receive recognition on national lists such as best places to live, best places to work, or any other "best of" list. 2018 brought some exciting ones that continued to help shine the national spotlight on our region.

Top 10 Best Places to Live for Singles – Appleton #9, Money.com

30 Best Small Cities in the United States – Appleton #21, Travel.alot.com

Best Places for Children – Appleton #2, SmartAsset.com

Top 25 Best Minor League Baseball Towns – Appleton #11, SmartAsset.com

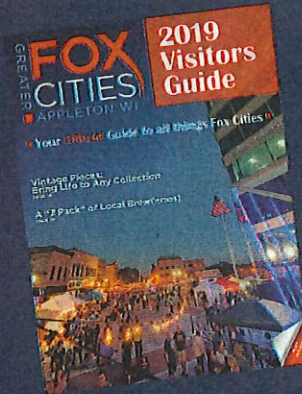
Best Museum in Wisconsin – History Museum at the Castle, MSN.com

## 2018 Press Tours

The CVB hosted two press tours in 2018, in May and August. The professional journalists hailed from across the U.S. and wrote for publications such as the Chicago Tribune, Group Tour Magazine, Wisconsin Meetings, Brava, The Montreal Times, USA Today and Making Music magazine, just to name a few.

Articles from those tours as well as a few articles from journalists who participated in past tours that came out in 2018 totaled over \$224,000. Highlights include Foodandwine.com, interviews airing on National Public Radio, St. Louis Bride & Groom magazine and Experience Wisconsin magazine.

Request your 2019  
Visitors Guide  
today!



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