

DCCVB View: Whiskey Acres featured in Travel Illinois Magazine

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There's big news to celebrate for DeKalb County Tourism. Whiskey Acres was selected to be featured in the fall/winter Travel Illinois magazine, which is available now in print and online at www.enjoyillinois.com/travelguides.

Whiskey Acres is the nation's second "Certified Farm Distillery" and the only one in Illinois. Look for it in the "Illinois Made" section of the magazine on pages 18 through 20. It is open from mid-March through November for tastings and tours of the farm and distillery. More than 7,000 visitors have made Whiskey Acres a destination since it opened in 2015. In its inaugural season, it hosted visitors from all seven continents, more than 20 countries, and nearly half of the states in the U.S.

Travel Illinois is available at the DeKalb County Convention & Visitors Bureau office. Stop by to pick one up between 9 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office is located on the floor of the Nehring Building at 111 S. Second St. in DeKalb.

The magazines also are being distributed throughout the state at trade shows, tourism events and seven Illinois Office of Tourism Information Centers. Better yet, head out to Whiskey Acres for a tasting and tour. Pick up a copy of the magazine while you're there. You might even get our award-winning distillers to autograph it for you!

Kite Fest

Mark your calendars for Sept. 11 for the 11th annual DeKalb Kite Fest. The hours are from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The DeKalb County CVB hosts the event and it is co-chaired by Doug Nelson. Thanks to our local sponsors, Chicago Kite, a group of dedicated kite flyers, and an army of local volunteers (mostly Northern Illinois University Huskies), we will be flying kites on campus at the "North 40," which is at the corner of Lucinda Avenue and Kishwaukee Drive.

There will be a \$3 fee per car for those who want to park in the NIU parking lots closest to the field. The fee helps offset the cost of putting on the event.

Only cash will be accepted.

The candy drop will be back along with the free kite kits that the kids enjoying making.

Sweet Dream Desserts and Catering and Crème King will be on hand for those who want to purchase food, drinks and treats. We hope to have an appearance by Victor E. Huskie in the afternoon.

Make sure to bring a blanket, lawn chairs, sunscreen, kites and the entire family. For information, visit [Facebook.com/DeKalbKiteFest](https://www.facebook.com/DeKalbKiteFest).

World Robotic Olympiad

There's really never a dull moment in the DCCVB office. We are the first point of contact for leisure visitors, business travelers and event planners. Most of the time we are working with event organizers anywhere from six to 18 months in advance of their arrival to ensure they have a successful event.

Currently, we are working with the Wong Foundation, the national organizer for World Robotic Olympiad-USA. They have selected the NIU Convocation Center as the site for their National Championship. We are expecting 100 to 150 families from across the United States on Sept. 2 through 5.

We estimate the economic impact for local businesses could be more than \$65,000 for the weekend. That is just for this year.

The group has plans to return next year. They will have plenty of time to shop, dine and explore throughout the weekend. Let's give them a warm welcome.

The actual competition takes place on Sunday, Sept. 4. There's no cost to attend. For details, visit <http://bit.ly/WROatNIU>.

Contestants ranging in age from elementary school to college design, build and program Lego Mindstorm and Tetrix/Matrix robots to complete specific challenges. WRO contestants apply science, technology, engineering and math concepts and knowledge to real world applications while developing essential skills like teamwork, problem solving, critical thinking, persistence and communication. Through its competitions, WRO inspires young people to continue on STEM paths to future STEM career.

We encourage local businesses to review the sponsorship opportunities that are available to help support the event at <http://bit.ly/WROatNIU>.

Until next time, safe travels.

- Debbie Armstrong is executive director of the DeKalb County Convention and Visitors Bureau.