



Great Rivers & Routes President: Ten-Minute Thursday Night Fireworks Displays Are To Show “We Are Open Light is Back On”

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau of Southwest Illinois President/CEO Cory Jobe explained today the upcoming Thursday night fireworks displays in Alton and Grafton are being done to show the “we are open light is back on” after months of COVID-19 restrictions.

Jobe went into more detail in an interview about the upcoming riverfront fireworks displays at 9 p.m. Thursdays from June 3 to September 9, with the exception of Fourth Of July weekend on Thursday, July 1. He said the displays are being done to help businesses hit hard by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Many in the region have received proper vaccines, which has helped in terms of COVID numbers.

Jobe said the fireworks displays are scheduled mostly to let people know businesses in the Downtown Alton and Grafton areas are open and ready to embrace customers after the past year of the COVID-19 Pandemic. He said while this area has somehow battled through COVID in a respectable fashion, it has been very tough on restaurants and small businesses. Sales tax revenue and revenues are considerably down, he said, but now the businesses deserve positive support.

“We will be fully open for business in June and want to rebuild some excitement,” he said. “What better way than all-American fireworks, not at one location, but both in Alton and Grafton. We wanted to encourage a weekend trip to the area and see people do it regularly. We are hoping those who visit the displays will spread to businesses. We think it is a big way to turn the “we are open light back on.”

The light show in Alton will launch from the parking lot at Landmarks and Henry Streets on the city’s riverfront. The Grafton show will launch from Grafton Lighthouse Park. The fireworks displays will be dazzling but will only last 10 minutes, Jobe said. Fireworks Authority, Inc., out of Quincy is coordinating the fireworks and has an excellent reputation.

“It will not be a long, prolonged show,” Jobe said of the Thursday night fireworks display.

He said the Thursday night fireworks displays will not rival the typical Fourth of July celebrations but will be a brief display prior to the weekend.

Jobe said Thursday night was chosen because of the special events happening in Alton and Grafton already on the schedule. The Alton Night Market is held every Thursday night on Broadway Street and features live music. Attendees will also have a great view of the fireworks, Jobe pointed out. A farmers market will be held in Grafton on

Thursdays and the ever-popular Grafton Music in the Park concert series also will take place on Thursday evenings. Both of those events precede the fireworks shows. The Grafton Ferry has added Thursday to its schedule to help encourage people to enjoy the Grafton fireworks.

Jobe encourages residents to embrace the fireworks and events that are set within the communities on Thursday nights in the summer and especially show support for the restaurants and bars, hit hard during the COVID-19 Pandemic as summer approaches.

Jobe said people travel from all over the region and state to visit businesses along the river and he hopes to see them back this summer.

He added that he and the others in the tourism industry are thankful COVID-19 restrictions are lifting and said have a heart for these restaurants and bars that shifted their business models time after time during the pandemic to stay alive.