



Building The Next Great Destination Is Theme For Annual Tourism Summit

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ALTON - What does it take to build the next great destination? The Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau of southwest Illinois will start that conversation during its annual Tourism Summit, Thursday, Jan. 27 at the Gateway Convention Center in Collinsville.

Tickets are still available for the 7:30 a.m. breakfast meeting which will highlight the accomplishments of the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau in 2021 and provide a

look into the bureau's plans to create the next great destination for the visiting public and residents. Individual tickets are \$24.50. All tickets are sold through the bureau's website: <https://www.riversandroutes.com/things-to-do/buy-tickets/>

"The Tourism Summit is the bureau's opportunity to meet with our partners and state leaders to showcase the economic impact of tourism on our six-county region," Cory Jobe, President & CEO of the tourism bureau noted. "In the coming year, we will be taking a regional, cooperative approach to building the destination we need for tourism that will also enhance the livability of southwest Illinois."

Featured speaker at the Summit will be Cathy Ritter, former Illinois and Colorado Office of Tourism State Travel Director and the founder of Better Destinations LLC.

Jobe will highlight the bureau's 2021 accomplishments which include a new website, increased targeted digital ad campaigns, a new data intelligence platform to give the region the clearest view of the visitor economy, and a resurgence in the cruise industry and group travel to the region. Three businesses from the region will be recognized for their accomplishments.

The annual summit is sponsored by Alton Works, Carrollton Bank, the City of Collinsville, and Phillips 66 Wood River Refinery.

The Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau is a certified Destination Marketing Organization serving Madison, Jersey, Calhoun, Macoupin, Montgomery and Greene counties. The bureau is dedicated to educating visitors about the region by providing information regarding the area's history, unique landmarks, recreational opportunities, leisure attractions, special events and scenic marvels.