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## 2014 Visitor Spending Increases in Pike County by 8.4 percent over 2013

Pittsfield, Il – The Illinois Office of Tourism recently released a state report, prepared by the U.S. Travel Association that reports total visitor spending in Illinois had another record year in 2014, contributing over \$36.3 billion to the Illinois economy. The state and county data indicate that tourism continues to be a strong economic force; creating jobs, stimulating business and generating tax revenues for communities and the state of Illinois.

The Quincy Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (QACVB) announced last week that the Western Illinois counties of Adams, Pike & Hancock generated \$152.65 million combined in visitor expenditures last year, with \$ 100.57 million spent in Adams, up 4.8%; \$26.66 million in Hancock Co., up 3.2%, and \$25.42 million in Pike County, up 8.4 %.

“The state report indicates that tourism in Pike County is alive and growing. Tourism supports over 100 local jobs with a payroll of \$3.04 million,” said Kaye Iftner, Executive Director of the Pike County Chamber of Commerce and the Pike County representative to the QACVB Board.

Iftner believes Pike County’s gains are the result of the combined efforts of its community leaders as well as the collaboration of a number of groups involved in tourism. “Hunting has always been our major draw in the fall, but we’ve made a

concerted effort to promote the beauty of Pike County during the other seasons. With the assistance of groups like Access Illinois Outdoors, PASA Park, Looking for Lincoln in Pike County, the QACVB, the New Philadelphia Association, Pike County Economic Development, and the Pike County Chamber of Commerce we've made great strides" says Iftner.

The Pike County Visitor Center, located at 224 W. Washington in Pittsfield, operated by the Pike County Chamber of Commerce and Pittsfield Main Street serves visitors from all over the country. Tourism signs on I-72 at both the New Salem and Griggsville exits direct visitors to the Visitors Center. Once there, they are helped in numerous ways, from providing Illinois state highway maps and attraction brochures, to directing them to local lodging, restaurants, and attractions.

Information on Pike County's events and attractions can be found in the "Visit" section of the Pike County Chamber of Commerce website, [www.pikeil.org](http://www.pikeil.org). You may also contact the Chamber office at 217-285-2971, or by email at [info@pikeil.org](mailto:info@pikeil.org). A copy of the full 102 county state reports can be obtained by contacting Iftner.

The Pike County Chamber of Commerce, established in 1987, is a coalition of area communities, industries, businesses, organizations, professionals, and individuals who pool their talent and resources to improve the economic, civic, and cultural climate of all of Pike County. Its mission is to make Pike County a great place to live, work and visit. The Pike County Chamber can be reached by telephone at 217-285-2971, by email at [info@pikeil.org](mailto:info@pikeil.org), or on the web at [www.pikeil.org](http://www.pikeil.org).