



**Travel Industry  
Association of Kansas**

**THE VOICE OF THE TRAVEL  
INDUSTRY IN KANSAS**

April 2018

Volume 13, Issue 4

# TIAK TALK

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**Big Kansas Road Trip**

**Meet Your TIAK Travel  
Agents Series**

**Upcoming Travel  
Calendar**

**Hospitality Hub**

**Educational Tour**

**Legislative Call to  
Action**

**National Travel &  
Tourism Week**

**2019 Kansas Official  
Travel Guide**

**Taste of TIAK**

**Calendar of Events**

## UPDATES FROM YOUR TOURISM GUIDE



*From Jan Stevens, TIAK President*

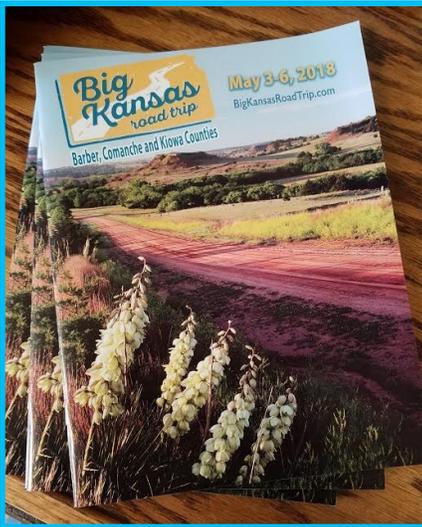
National Travel and Tourism Week is right around the corner! I know several of you are planning for events and activities for that upcoming week. The theme for this year is “Travel Then and Now.” The topic is a good one that fits everyone. National Travel and Tourism Week is an annual tradition for the U.S. travel community. It’s a time when travel and tourism professionals across the country unite to celebrate the value travel holds for our economy, businesses and personal well-being. Please be sure to keep TIAK and Wildlife Parks and Tourism abreast of your plans for the week.

In Kansas, the total economic impact is \$10.4 BILLION, a number that impresses me! Kansas has hosted 35.4 MILLION visitors, and has an employment impact of 94,126 jobs, according to 2017 statistics. Great stuff!

I was very impressed with the educational seminar on Crisis Management in Salina this month. “Trooper Dan” was engaging and made you think about the tragedies and crises we face in this country, and how we might better deal with them. Mayor Dixon from Greensburg gave an extraordinary presentation on how you can work together to accomplish just about anything, including putting a town back together. The lesson on the spirit of survival and coming to a common clarity on goals, and getting everyone involved in the end process was so inspiring.

Mayor Dixon also spoke of a BIG event in Greensburg. So be sure to mark your calendars, and make plans to attend The Big Kansas Road Trip (BKRT). This grassroots effort will showcase Barber, Comanche, and Kiowa counties. You can see the changes in Greensburg since the tornado in 2007, and explore scenic backroads, and descend on cafes, and attractions in that area. It’s May3-6, in the heart of Kansas. For more information, visit here:

*“When anything is going to happen in this country, it happens first in Kansas.”*  
—William Allen White ■



## BIG KANSAS ROAD TRIP (BKRT)

The public is invited to explore Barber, Comanche and Kiowa counties on May 3-6 as part of the first ever Big Kansas Road Trip (BKRT). The event, facilitated by the Inman-based Kansas Sampler Founda-

tion, replaces the long-running Kansas Sampler Festival.

Foundation director Marci Penner said, "The purpose of the festival was to provide the public a sample of what there is to see, do hear, taste and buy in Kansas. This BKRT provides a full plate of first-hand experiences. It's like the three counties are having an open house and offering opportunities for the public to get to know who they are and what they have."

People will choose what they want to do and when. There is no organized caravan or a single itinerary. Greensburg's tourism director [Stacy Barnes](#) said, "Each person or family can design their adventure around the things they like. Some people want to do scenic drives and others may want to explore one county per day. Families may have a quest to play on the playground in every town in the three counties. We just want people to have a great time in our Red Hills and High Plains area."

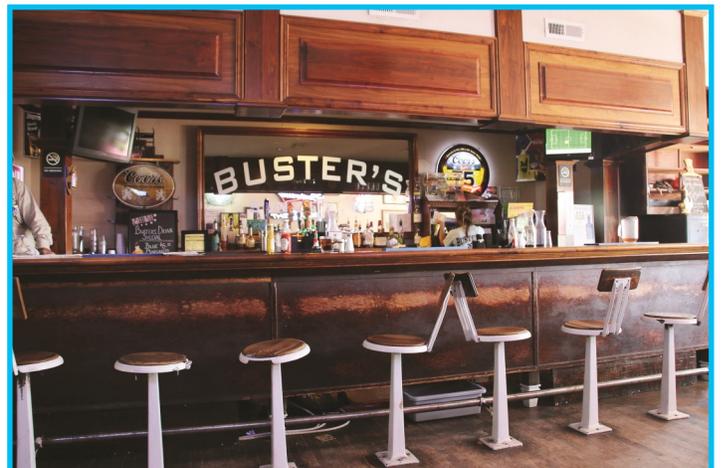
Many towns are hosting scheduled activities. A 40-page event guide is now available (contact the Big Well, Greensburg) and an up-to-date day program will be available at information centers in each county seat during the BKRT. Those locations are Heritage Park (Main and New York) in Coldwater, the Big Well (315 S. Sycamore) in Greensburg, and the Red Caboose (Main and U.S. 160) in Medicine Lodge.

Activities include everything from cookies with Carry Nation in Medicine to a presentation by Stan Herd in Protection to a wheat threshing demonstration in Haviland. You can sign a "guest book" on the WPA swimming pool bath house wall in Greensburg or leave your mark on the Twisted Sisters wall in Protection. Find Kansas authors and musicians, a craft fair and a vintage/retro/antique show. A tour to a meteorite field, a porch visit with a mayor, tours on bicycles, an evening at a family farm, it's all available at the BKRT.

Some of the best known attractions in the three counties include the Big Well and Kiowa County Museum and soda fountain in Greensburg, the free carousel in Wilmore, Lake Coldwater, the Stockade Museum and Carry Nation House in Medicine Lodge, the Gypsum Hills Scenic Byway on U.S. 160, Buster's Saloon in Sun City, and the Fromme-Birney Round Barn and M.T. Liggett's whirligig sculptures in Mullinville.

Penner said, "We have no idea how many people will come. All we know is that the people of Barber, Comanche and Kiowa counties are excited and ready to welcome the public to their hometowns."

For more information, visit [www.bigkansasroadtrip.com](http://www.bigkansasroadtrip.com) and like and share the [Big Kansas Road Trip Facebook page](#). ■





## MEET YOUR TIAK TRAVEL AGENTS SERIES

### SUSAN RATHKE, TIAK SECRETARY

I am **Susan Rathke**, Director of the Emporia Convention and Visitors Bureau. I have been with the bureau for 25 years in May and have served as Director since 2014. I am a Kansas City, Kansas native and came to Emporia State University (ESU) not really knowing what I wanted to be. I graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in General Recreation and went directly into banking for 16 years. Banking is a great business to be in when you can't get the job you really want.

Thankfully, a position opened up with the Emporia Chamber and Visitors Bureau and I got it! I've been selling Emporia since 1993 and don't regret it for a minute. Tourism in Emporia and Kansas has been the best and rewarding industry to work in every day and I believe recreation and tourism go hand-in-hand.

I can't say enough about the friends I've made and the relationships that make this work so worth it. I have to say, the work I do has greatly affected my family in their everyday lives. They, too, have a deeper appreciation for where they live and how important tourism is in Emporia. I have two grown daughters, each with two children, and thankfully they live here. Oh, and my retired husband and I have been married for 41 years this June. He too has played a big part in our community for many years.

While I think it's almost impossible to not know what Emporia is known for these days, it wasn't always that way. The Dirty Kanza began as a little bike race starting in a hotel parking lot with 34 riders. The Glass Blown Open (GBO) Disc Golf Tournament, started out as a hobby with local players. The Dynamic Discs business started out with a guy selling discs on Ebay from the trunk of his car.

Today, Emporia is known around the world as a destination for these two sports, not only for their events, but as a town that embraces the sports year round. We are a cycling town, we are a disc golf town, and we eat it up. And what's more, we are the official founding city of Veteran's Day, designated by the U.S. Congress in 2003.

It's hard to not be proud of all of this, we do try to be humble. The Emporia CVB can't take credit for all of it, but we sure do support it all that we can.



**APRIL 26-28, 2018**

**EMPORIA, KS**

Our town has grown significantly in the tourism world and within our own boundaries. It might sound hokie, but it really does take a village. Being a member of TIAK for so many years has helped me learn and grown in this industry. I believe TIAK and the men and women that run the organization are some of the champions of Kansas tourism and Kansas would not be where we are today without them. I enjoy serving as secretary for TIAK and look forward to the future. ■



## UPCOMING TRAVEL CALENDAR

*May 2018*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>6</u>	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>13</b>	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	<b>28</b>	29	30	31		

Click on the highlighted calendar dates for more information.

**May 3-6**

[Big Kansas Road Trip](#)

**May 6-12**

[Travel and Tourism Week](#)

**May 28**

Mother's Day

**May 28**

Memorial Day

**Every Thursday**

e-Learning Webinars  
(see Pg. 5 for more details)

For a complete listing of 2018 TIAK meetings, visit the [TIAK website](#).

## HOSPITALITY HUB



[Livestock Manager position available at the Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm Historic Site in Olathe.](#)

To review the complete list of opportunities available, visit the [TIAK website](#).



### Vote for Dodge City

**Best Historic Small Town**

Famous for its Wild West shenanigans featuring Bat Masterson and Wyatt Earp during the late 19th century, Dodge City maintains much of its historical appeal. The Boot Hill Museum features a replica of the

town circa 1876, complete with nearly 30,000 artifacts and the graves of gunfight victims, while the Wild West Heritage Area educates on how livestock changed the cultural landscape of Southwest Kansas.

<http://www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-historic-small-town-2018/dodge-city-kansas/>



Educate yourself in 2018 compliments of the Kansas Tourism Division. Kansas Tourism partners, sign up with a username and password [HERE](#). Access recorded programs at anytime or view live webinars each Thursday.

## UPCOMING ONLINE COURSES

### MAY 2018 SCHEDULE

**What the Tech? Exploring the Impact of Technology on Travel PR and Measurement**  
*Thursday, May 3*

**Your Digital Metrics Are Lying to You... And What To Do About It**  
*Thursday, May 10*

**Multi-Channel Content Campaign Optimization**  
*Thursday, May 17*

**How to Find the Most Effective Keywords For Your Business**  
*Thursday, May 24*

**The New African American Traveler and How They Make Travel Decisions**  
*Thursday, May 31*

Check out all of our upcoming webinars [HERE](#).



## RECORDED COURSES

Kansas Tourism partners, sign up with username and password [HERE](#). Then view the recorded webinars [HERE](#).

## EDUCATIONAL TOUR

Visit the Educational section of the TIAK website under "Resources" by clicking [here](#) for a listing of additional educational opportunities.

### SM&SH! Summit

SM&SH stands for Sales and Marketing & Service and Hospitality. Tickets are \$30 per person and the first 1,000 to sign up get books from both bestselling authors and everyone will receive at least one book.

The event is an effort by Visit Topeka during National Travel and Tourism week to help train our service and hospitality community to better take care of visitors. For more information, click [here](#). To purchase tickets, click [here](#).



Thank you to the speakers and 40 participants of the TIAK educational seminar on Crisis Management in April.





Lawmakers are scheduled to return to Topeka on Thursday, April 26th. One issue still remaining to be resolved is HB 2184, an adoption and foster care bill. During the TIAK board meeting last week there was discussion this bill could have potential unintended consequences due to changes the Senate made to it. See below for the language in question (highlighted). The full bill may be accessed [here](#).

19 *(c) No child placement agency shall be denied a license, permit or*  
 20 *other authorization, or the renewal thereof, or have any such license,*  
 21 *permit or other authorization revoked or suspended by any state agency,*  
 22 *or any political subdivision of the state solely because of the agency's*  
 23 *objection to performing, assisting, counseling, recommending,*  
 24 *consenting to, referring or otherwise participating in a placement that*  
 25 *violates such agency's sincerely held religious beliefs.*

26 *(d) No child placement agency shall be denied any grant or*  
 27 *contract, or participation in a program by any state agency, or any*  
 28 *political subdivision of the state solely because of the agency's objection*  
 29 *to performing, assisting, counseling, recommending, consenting to,*  
 30 *referring or otherwise participating in a placement that violates such*  
 31 *agency's sincerely held religious beliefs.*

32 *(e) Refusal of a child placement agency to perform, assist, counsel,*  
 33 *recommend, consent to, refer or otherwise participate in any placement*  
 34 *that would violate such agency's sincerely held religious beliefs shall not*  
 35 *form the basis for the imposition of a civil fine or other adverse*  
 36 *administrative action or any claim or cause of action under any state or*

Specifically, the TIAK board is concerned HB 2481 as amended will be deemed discriminatory similar to SB 175, which passed during the 2015 Session, and is the impetus for Kansas being placed on the California travel ban. HB 2481 creates a discriminatory environment for taxpayer funded child placement agencies to not place children with foster or adoptive parents, single parents, or any parents who don't meet a contractor's religious criteria. Many feel this type of legislation allows discrimination based on religious beliefs and will tarnish our state's reputation. Unfortunately, TIAK members know first-hand the implications of the passage of SB 175 and how it has negatively impacted travel to Kansas. In addition, we have also heard some Kansas contractors are not being awarded contracts by large California cities based on the passage of SB 175. If HB 2481 is passed this session, we can expect the economic losses to continue.

## LEGISLATIVE CALL TO ACTION

As such, the TIAK board asked we put together talking points regarding TIAK's concerns with HB 2184 and why TIAK opposed its passage. [Click here to access TIAK's Talking Points](#). For clarification, we do not oppose the underlying bill, but only the Senate amendments made during floor debate. Therefore, we are asking all TIAK members to contact their House members and ask they vote NO on a motion to concur and keep the bill in conference committee unless the controversial language is removed in conference committee. Please take time in the next two days to reach out to your House members and express your concerns about HB 2481.

In addition, TIAK has joined the Kansas Employers for Liberty Coalition (KELC), which is opposing HB 2481 based on the discrimination provision. [Click here to access a KELC letter](#) that outlines the business issues further along with providing additional background information. If you know of any business partners who would like to join the KELC, please have them contact [Natalie Bright](#) or [Marlee Carpenter](#). Additionally, you may contact Natalie or Marlee with any questions.

Sharing any feedback you receive from your legislators is appreciated. To access contact information for your House members, click [here](#). ■

**Veto Session begins**  
**April 26th and**  
**will officially end**  
**May 4th**



### LEGISLATIVE AUDIO

Take advantage of the live audio feeds from the Kansas Legislature. To listen to Senate proceedings, click [here](#). To listen to House proceedings, click [here](#). In addition, some committees have live audio feeds, as well. For a list of Senate committees, click [here](#). For a list of House committees, click [here](#).

## NATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURISM WEEK



From [U.S. Travel](#)

### “Welcome” The Key to America’s Travel Industry

Trends and technology may come and go, but one thing remains the same: the spirit of welcome is essential to the U.S. travel industry.

“Welcome.” This enduring ethos has driven America’s travel industry from the days of folding maps to the era of GPS. Making sure each visitor has the most positive and memorable experience possible is the philosophy at the heart of the U.S. travel and tourism community. It’s worth recognizing this National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW) as we celebrate 35 years of this annual industry observance.

As we announced late last year, the theme of [National Travel and Tourism Week 2018](#) is “Travel Then and Now.” It’s all about shining a spotlight on the contributions and accomplishments of the U.S. travel industry over the last several decades, while advocating for policies that will benefit travelers for generations to come.

This year, it’s also the perfect opportunity to show exactly how your community extends a warm welcome to travelers from near and far. In fact, it’s never been more important to promote such a message, in light of the recent decline in America’s share of the international travel market.

So, how can travel businesses, destination and communities add the “welcome” element to their NTTW celebration this year? We’ve got a few ideas to demonstrate to our country—and the world—what makes the American travel industry great:

- “Share your welcome,” either individually or when your community unites at [Travel Rally Day](#) with simple gestures such as a video filmed on your phone, a picture, or a short note welcoming visitors to your destination, and post it on social media with the

#nttw18 hashtag. (Feel free to draw some inspiration from Brand USA’s [One Big Welcome campaign!](#)) The Colorado Tourism Office has taken this idea and made it their own—[check out their toolkit](#) for some inspiration.

- In your social media posts, blog posts, op-eds, and other communications, give examples of how your community has grown economically and culturally thanks to travel—emphasizing that it’s all because your destination prioritized welcoming travelers.
- When you post or share [those great old pictures](#) of your destination or attraction from years ago, caption them with a statement that emphasizes how welcome has always been a part of your culture, no matter the time in history (for example, “Whether they bring steamer trunks or roller bags, arrive by stagecoach or rideshare, {DESTINATION} has always welcomed visitors from all over”).

Check out the [NTTW toolkit](#) where we provide updated messages and ideas on ways you can “share your welcome” while you celebrate “Travel Then and Now.” New travel numbers for 2017 are also available for you to use in your communications and social media campaigns. Finally, be sure to tell us how you’ll be celebrating by adding your event to the [NTTW event map](#).

NTTW gives our industry a chance to reiterate what makes us unique, and make sure our guests know they are welcomed and valued—always have been and always will be. Travel to and within the U.S. looks very different now than it did even a few decades ago, but one thing has always remained the same: America’s desire to welcome visitors is what truly makes our country great. ■

*Be sure to share your National Travel and Tourism Week pictures with the [TIAK Office!](#)*

## 2019 KANSAS OFFICIAL TRAVEL GUIDE

The 2019 *Kansas Official Travel Guide* is officially open for business! *Midwest Living*, a Meredith Corporation magazine brand and strong partner of Kansas Tourism, will once again be publishing the guide. The guide provides inspiration and planning tools for those with an interest in traveling in Kansas. 400,000 guides are distributed annually to people who request them and at rest stops, visitor centers, and events, in and out of Kansas. Additionally, an online guide is available for download on TravelKS.com.

An early bird discount of 5% for ads & listings is available if placed before May 31. Visit the [Kansas Official Travel Guide](#) webpage or contact Christina Green with *Midwest Living* at 312-580-1607 or [Christina.Green@meredith.com](mailto:Christina.Green@meredith.com) for more information. Online payment option available. ■



Do you know any organizations that would benefit from a “Taste of TIAK?” Encourage them to Join TIAK at a discounted rate by clicking [here](#).

*“TIAK has been a huge asset to my community, to me and my career development. I would say the number one thing TIAK provides for me is networking with other tourism industry professionals across Kansas that can be there to help. When I started in my position, I was new to the tourism industry and had a huge learning curve. My first TIAK conference helped me to meet people in jobs just like mine and have top notch educational opportunities . . .and, we have fun!”*

—Stacy Barnes, Greensburg Tourism Director and Big Well Museum Director

taste

OF



**Travel Industry Association of Kansas (TIAK)**

Not sure if you should bite off  
more than you can chew?

Any new member can join TIAK in 2018 for just \$50!  
This special “Taste of TIAK” is good for new members only,  
and is being offered through the end of the year.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS  
(CLICK ON EACH LINK FOR  
MORE INFORMATION):

May 3-6, 2018

[Big Kansas Road Trip](#)

Barber, Comanche &  
Kiowa Counties

May 6-12, 2018

[National Travel & Tourism Wk](#)

(Travel Then and Now)  
Nationwide

June 1, 2018

[Governor’s Council on  
Tourism meeting](#)

Topeka, Kan.

June 18-22, 2018

Tourism Roadshow

Travel Industry Association  
of Kansas

825 S. Kansas, Suite 502

Topeka, KS 66612

PH: 785.233.9465

Email: [office@tiak.org](mailto:office@tiak.org)

[www.tiak.org](http://www.tiak.org)



**Travel Industry  
Association of Kansas**