

2011

KAUKAUNA

WISCONSIN TIMBER RATTLED MENASHA BUBOLZ NATURE PRESERVE HOUDINI

USA YOUTH SPORTS COMPLEX TOWN OF NEENAH

HECKRODT WETLAND RESERVE THE BUILDING FOR KIDS CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

BUCHANAN TOWN OF MENASHA FREEDOM KIMBERLY HARRISON WEIS EARTH SCIENCE MUSEUM

APPLETON

PAPER DISCOVERY CENTER FOX RIVER LOCKS HIGH CLIFF STATE PARK

GRAND CHUTE

VANDENBROEK CLAYTON HEARTHSTONE GREENVILLE SHERWOOD

NEENAH

foxcities.org

FOX CITIES Convention & Visitors Bureau

1000 ISLANDS ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

LAKE WINNEBAGO COMBINED LOCKS

BERGSTROM-MAHLER MUSEUM LITTLE CHUTE WOODVILLE

SHOPPING TROUT MUSEUM OF ART BARLOW PLANETARIUM

ANNUAL REPORT



**Cheryl Zaug Casey,**  
Board Chair

*Cheryl Zaug Casey*

# INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF FOX CITIES TOURISM

In 2011, the Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau celebrated 25 years of economic development through tourism. Over the course of the year, the Bureau board and staff worked diligently on plans to keep the Bureau, and our community's tourism industry, strong for the next 25 years.

We tackled three separate research projects — a stakeholder study, an analysis of similar CVBs and a consumer and brand study. It was gratifying to know that our constituents hold the Bureau in high regard and helpful to learn what we can do better in the future. We were pleased to learn that the *Wisconsin's Shopping Place* brand rings true, and we also gained numerous insights that will help us attract even more visitors to the Fox Cities.

Our organization made a major change when we broadened the scope of our grant program and renamed it the "Tourism Development Grant Fund" to better reflect its mission. We approved our first "Wow Exhibits" grant and are excited about the potential to host high-profile exhibits with the power to attract overnight visitors. With a goal of ensuring the Exhibition Center project's success, the Bureau also pledged a Tourism Development Grant of \$250,000 toward the cost of architectural design for the facility.

Years of careful fiscal management by the board and staff have paid off for the Bureau, and we're very proud to report that we are in solid shape financially. With an emergency fund and operating reserve in place to backstop us in tough times, we can move into the future with great confidence.

In its 25-year history, this organization has had just two executive directors. When our current director, Lynn Peters, announced her plans to depart, the board immediately appointed a search committee to begin the transition process. Lynn has been an outstanding leader and the Bureau has experienced many significant accomplishments during her tenure. A change in leadership presents both opportunities and challenges and, with that in mind, we look forward to welcoming a new leader.

In closing, I wish to personally thank the Bureau board, committees and staff, along with community leaders, organizations and volunteers that assist us in our mission of economic growth through tourism. No individual or organization can succeed alone, and I know the Bureau benefits greatly from your continued support.

## ORGANIZATION

The Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc., is a private, non-stock corporation with a board of directors consisting of an equal number of municipal representatives, hotel managers and owners, and community leaders who review and approve Bureau policy, program and budget. The Bureau is funded primarily with room tax collected by municipalities in the Fox Cities.

## BUREAU STAFF

### **Chris Church**

*Bureau Services Manager*

### **Ellie De Shaney**

*Weekend Visitor Aide*

### **Matt Ten Haken**

*Sports Sales Manager*

### **Mae Ibe**

*Director of Convention Sales*

### **Lynn Peters**

*Executive Director*

### **Pam Seidl**

*Director of Marketing  
& Community Relations*

### **Kathy Smits**

*Weekend Visitor Aide*

### **Jennifer Sommer**

*Visitor & Administrative  
Services Assistant*

### **Kim Tisler**

*Director of Operations*

### **Karen Trembl**

*Visitor & Administrative  
Services Assistant*

### **Wendy Weir**

*Weekend Visitor Aide*

*Dozens of volunteers also help the Bureau with its work.*

## 2011 BUREAU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### **Cheryl Zaug Casey, Chair**

### **Bob Dove, Vice Chair**

*Best Western Premier Bridgewood  
Resort Hotel & Conf. Cntr.*

### **Jay Schumerth, Treasurer**

*Radisson Paper Valley Hotel*

### **Jeff Nooyen, Secretary**

*Grand Chute Town Board*

### **Michelle Bauer**

*US Bank*

### **Terry Bergman**

*Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce*

### **John Burgland**

*Fox River Mall*

### **Mark Dougherty**

*Mark's Eastside*

### **Chris Haese**

*City of Neenah*

### **Karen Harkness**

*City of Appleton*

### **Randy Kliment**

*Hampton Inn Appleton*

### **Al Schaefer**

*Village of Kimberly*

### **Dan Schetter**

*CopperLeaf Boutique Hotel*

### **Vicki Schneider**

*Village of Little Chute*

### **Chadd Scott**

*Settle Inn & Suites Appleton*

### **Char Stankowski**

*Hilton Garden Inn*

### **Jan Smith**

*Bergstrom-Mahler Museum*

### **John Van Drunen**

# 2011 GRANTS

Unique in Wisconsin and perhaps in the nation, the Tourism Development Grant Program has given grants as small as \$2,000 and as large as \$1,000,000 to develop visitor attractions and amenities. In its 25-year history, the Bureau has made \$6,494,027 in grants.

In 2011, the Bureau paid out \$186,803 in grants, with an additional \$163,186 pledged for future grant payments.

<b>Bergstrom-Mahler Museum Exterior Sign</b>	<b>\$12,600</b>
<b>Fox River Portages</b>	<b>\$7,500</b>
<b>History Museum at the Castle Exterior Sign</b>	<b>\$16,379</b>
<b>Little Chute Windmill*</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>
<b>USA Youth Sports Complex Upgrade*</b>	<b>\$78,400</b>

*\*Partial grant payment*

## 2012 GOALS

- Book 36,500 future hotel room nights.
- Use the findings from the 2011 brand research project to implement stronger brand elements and improve advertising effectiveness.
- Assist the three communities working to adopt the Bureau's wayfinding signage plan.
- Develop a special Tourism Development Grant for pedestrian map kiosks in areas with heavy visitor traffic.
- Strengthen ties with key constituents by hosting tourism-focused networking and education events.
- Study changing Visitor Center needs and potential future Bureau office locations.
- Work closely with Exhibition Center leaders to formalize the roles the Bureau will play in facility planning, marketing, sales and event booking.
- Make a successful Executive Director transition.



# 2011 IN REVIEW

## HOTEL OCCUPANCY

- The percentage of hotel rooms occupied increased just slightly from 2010.
- Room rates rose by 5%.

## BUREAU SUCCESSSES

- Replenished operating reserves diminished during economic downturn; grew emergency fund.
- Accepted applications for the new "Wow Exhibits" grant program and approved the first grant.

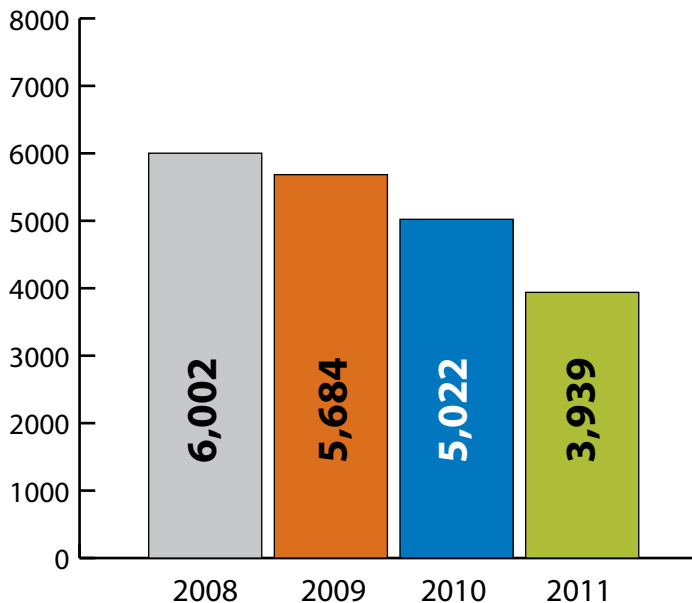
## CONVENTION SALES

- Booked 17,034 future room nights.
- Hosted an educational event for 52 Madison meeting planners, building awareness of the Fox Cities.
- Executed a sales blitz, calling on 300 meeting planners in the Madison area.
- Exhibited at five trade shows.
- Hosted the Future Business Leaders of America-WI Chapter for the first time ever in the Fox Cities. The event brought more than 2,100 students from across the state for a two-day convention.

## VISITOR SERVICES

- Welcomed 5,649 visitors at the Visitor Center and EAA welcome stations.
- Served 52,659 visitors via our website, foxcities.org.

### VISITOR CENTER WALK-IN TRAFFIC



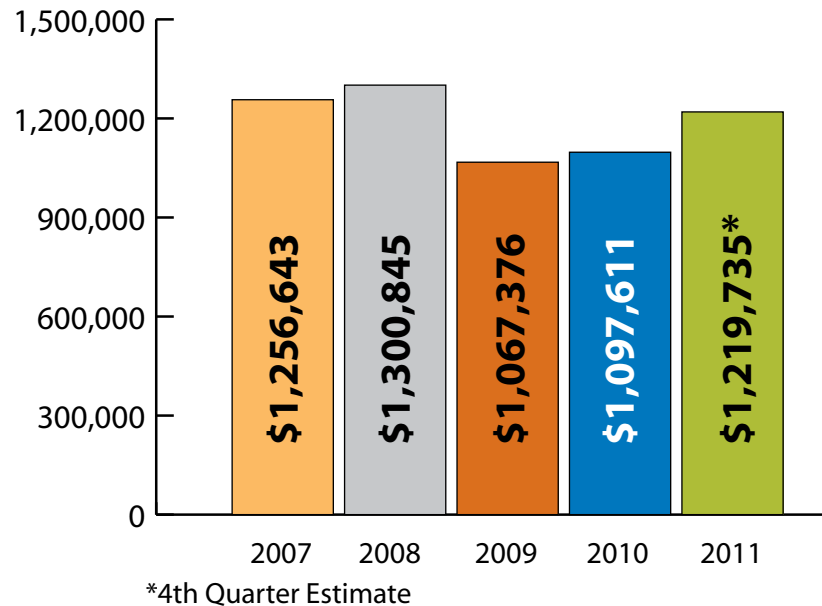
## CONVENTION & SPORTS SERVICES

- Organized a total of 261 volunteers for various conventions and sports events.
- Total volunteer hours for 2011 were 785, which is equivalent to one person working 20 weeks full-time.

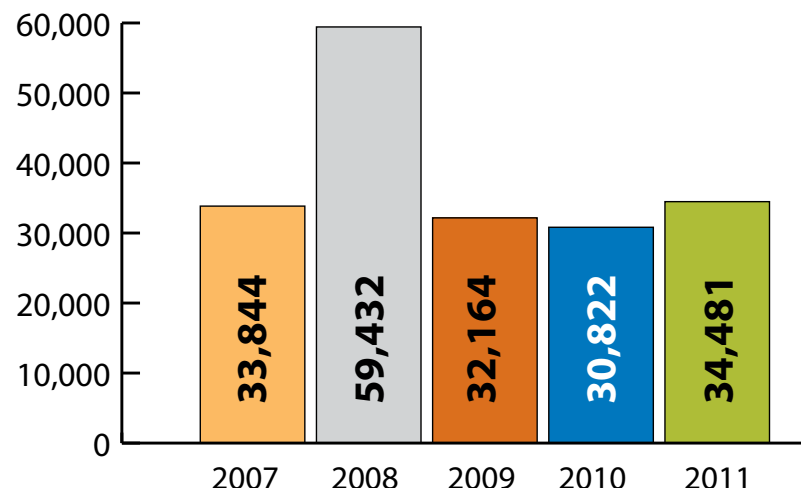
## SPORTS SALES

- Assisted on successful bids for the 2014 Wisconsin Youth Bowling Tournament and 2012 USA Ultimate Division III National Championship.
- Booked 19 brand new sporting events in the Fox Cities for the spring and summer of 2012 with an estimated 2,660 room nights.
- Recorded 15,550 future room nights.
- Introduced a grant program that encourages creation of new sporting events in the Fox Cities.

### BUREAU ROOM TAX REVENUE



### HOTEL ROOMS BOOKED

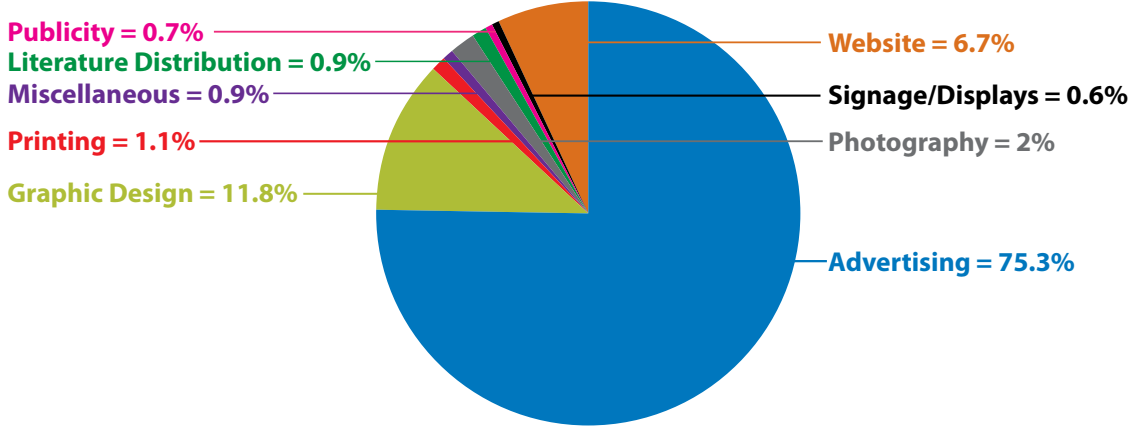




## MARKETING

- Conducted three major research projects to benchmark the Bureau's brand, local perception of the organization and a comparison of the organization with a competitive set.
- Deepened the Bureau's activity in social media.
- Wrote and implemented two Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Grants, one for research and one for the religious meetings market.
- Managed the publication of the Bureau's annual Visitor Guide to ensure it was a successful revenue generator.

## MARKETING BUDGET



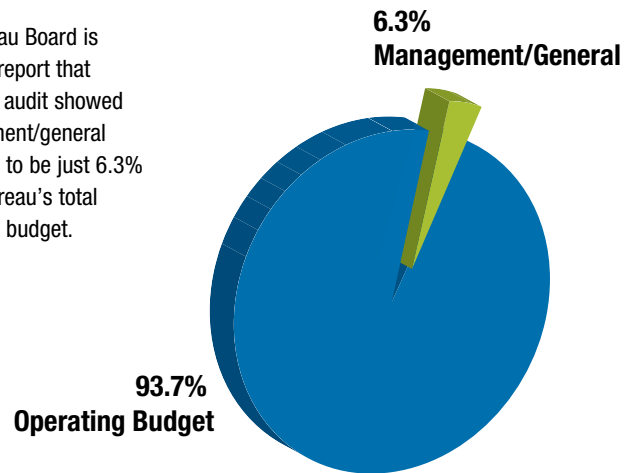
# 2011 OPERATING BUDGET

	2011 Year-End Actual	2012 Budget
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Room Tax Income - Oper	\$971,410.48	\$960,000.00
Interest Income - Oper	5,654.82	4,500.00
Grants Income	31,529.50	0.00
Sponsorship/Incidental Income	13,125.00	12,500.00
Visitor Guide Income	50,020.00	45,000.00
Tourism Development Admin Reimb	24,775.00	25,700.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$1,096,514.80</b>	<b>\$1,047,700.00</b>

<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Salaries & Wages	\$362,871.02	\$394,400.00
Employee Benefits	103,891.18	116,200.00
Professional Development	7,634.54	8,500.00
Convention Event Services	3,597.67	4,000.00
Trade Shows	2,539.21	3,000.00
Selling Expenses	32,039.21	38,000.00
Marketing	236,864.21	265,000.00
Visitor Guide	41,347.66	42,000.00
Research	43,298.10	15,000.00
Rent/Utilities/Taxes	95,359.68	98,000.00
Capital Equipment Expenses	3,591.00	3,200.00
Equipment Leases	6,382.21	5,350.00
Automobile Expenses	7,164.00	8,200.00
Local Meetings	8,802.85	8,700.00
Office Supplies	5,230.19	6,800.00
Postage & Shipping	7,983.63	10,500.00
Telephone	4,960.28	6,000.00
Property/Casualty Insurance	5,631.35	6,100.00
Professional Services	18,591.24	20,750.00
Memberships	6,275.00	7,400.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,004,054.23</b>	<b>\$1,067,100.00</b>

## MANAGEMENT & GENERAL

The Bureau Board is proud to report that our 2010 audit showed management/general expenses to be just 6.3% of the Bureau's total operating budget.





## MISSION

The Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau is an economic development organization that strengthens the Fox Cities by attracting visitors in the convention, sports and leisure markets through sales, marketing and destination development.

# Fox Cities

East Central Wisconsin

Wisconsin's  
Shopping  
Place®

Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau  
3433 W. College Avenue  
Appleton, Wisconsin 54914  
920-734-3358  
[www.foxcities.org](http://www.foxcities.org)