

Tourism is an economic stimulus

Not many people realize the full impact tourism has on our economy here in Greater Mankato. That is, unless your livelihood depends on it.

This week is National Travel & Tourism Week and I couldn't let the week go by without sharing some important facts about tourism and its impact on our economy.

Travel and tourism is one of the United States' most important economic drivers. It's also the second biggest industry in Minnesota behind agriculture.

Nationally, travel is responsible for \$704 billion in direct spending, 7.4 million direct jobs, \$186 billion in payroll and \$111 billion in tax revenue. In Minnesota, tourism employs almost a quarter of a million residents. There are few industries that can compete with this kind of output.

The story is similar locally. Here in Greater Mankato, travel is responsible for 2,500 jobs, \$155 million in economic activity, and \$3.5 million in tax receipts.

Did you know that every household in the country saves on average \$950 per year in taxes due to taxes that are generated through travel? As president of the Greater Mankato Convention & Visitor Bureau (CVB), Travel & Tourism Week runs all year for us. It's our job to always be living the mission of the CVB, which is to drive the visitor economy through tourism, conventions and tournaments to our wonderful city. Here are a couple ways that everyone can help us do that: **Bring it Home.**

Conventions and meetings are a major driver of local jobs and a boost to local spending. When these meetings dry up, our community's small businesses and workers suffer. So we need to do what we can to support the meetings industry and encourage more businesses and associations to bring their meetings here. We are so thrilled that the local Rotarians just held their regional conference here in Mankato and it's estimated that the group created a direct economic impact of \$105,750.

Spread the Word. Travelers pick destinations for many different reasons, but hearing great things about Mankato from a local might help someone decide that they could come for a visit. Word of mouth is a huge influencer in travel decision making.

Since it is National Travel and Tourism Week, it's a great time to let us at the CVB know if there are any associations, clubs or sporting groups that you are a part of that we can entice to bring their next convention, meeting or tournament to Greater Mankato. And help us spread the word about all the wonderful attractions and reasons to visit Mankato, so we can increase tourism visitors.

And last but not least, it's the perfect time to tell your friends and neighbors in the tourism industry, that you appreciate everything they are doing to support our Greater Mankato local economy!

Anna Thill is president of the Greater Mankato Convention & Visitors Bureau.



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My View