

# Wisconsin Dells®

Visitor & Convention Bureau



# 2023

## ANNUAL REPORT



JULY 2024

## Hello Bureau Partners,

As we close the book on 2023 and look forward to 2024, I can't help but feel proud of all that we've accomplished in the past 12 months. Coming off a record-setting year in 2022, we had to set our goals very high – and we surpassed them. It is the Wisconsin Dells way.

The key to this success is you, the members of the Wisconsin Dells business community. While our region is blessed with amazing natural beauty, it is our entrepreneurial spirit and dedication to customer experience that has kept us firmly entrenched as the leading travel destination in the Midwest. Beyond that, it is our ability to see the big picture and work together, pooling resources to create campaigns and programs that are more than the sum of their individual parts. It is said that a rising tide lifts all boats. While there are no tides here, that phrase certainly applies along the Dells of the Wisconsin River.

As we plan for the new year, we will keep our goals high and continue looking for ways to continue our growth. Your input in that area is critical, so we hope to see you, hear from you, and work with you all the way through.

Congratulations on your passion, creativity, and work ethic. While our iconic canyons and cliffs may be made of sandstone, these traits are the true bedrock of Wisconsin Dells.

Sincerely,



Jill C. Diehl  
President/CEO

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# MISSION

The Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau (WDVCB) is the official destination marketing organization for the Wisconsin Dells area, whose mission is to grow the economic impact of tourism by inspiring and encouraging travel to the community through innovative marketing and economic development strategies, benefiting our visitors, community, and business partners.

# VISION

Our vision is to secure the Wisconsin Dells area as a premier year-round tourism destination.



## WDVCB PARTNERS BY CATEGORY IN 2023

Accommodation	64
Associate/Supplier Partner	62
Attraction	104
Campground	10
Eat & Drink	94
Retail	58
Visitor Services	21

Total 413





# ECONOMIC IMPACT

ESTIMATED VISITOR SPENDING

**\$1.40B**

DIRECT VISITOR SPENDING

UP 2.4% OVER 2022

**\$2.02B**

TOTAL TOURISM-BASED ECONOMIC IMPACT

UP 3.2% OVER 2022

## EST. VISITOR EXPENDITURES COMPARISON BY SEASON



DEC-FEB  
**22%**  
\$309,355,057



MAR-MAY  
**22%**  
\$303,712,739

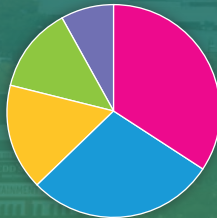


JUNE-AUG  
**40%**  
\$560,178,578



SEPT-NOV  
**16%**  
\$230,869,172

## EST. VISITOR EXPENDITURES BY CATEGORY



- Lodging \$483,179,447
- Food & Beverage \$400,115,196
- Retail \$228,001,857
- Recreation \$184,032,219
- Transportation \$108,786,828

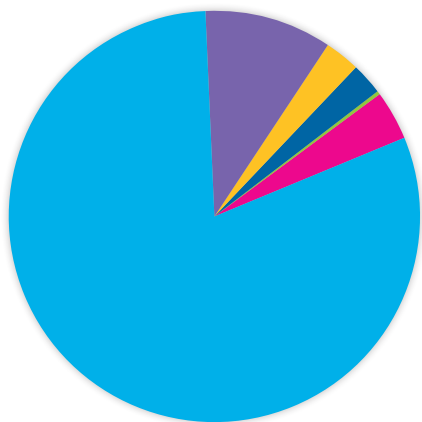
## TOTAL FULL-TIME JOBS SUPPORTED BY TOURISM

	2022	2023	% Change
Direct Impact	11,681	12,040	+3.1%
Total Impact	14,763	15,125	+2.5%

## TOTAL GOVERNMENT TAXES GENERATED

	2022	2023	% Change
State	\$44.6 million	\$47.2 million	+5.8%
Local	\$58.9 million	\$62.8 million	+6.7%

# WDVCB FINANCIALS

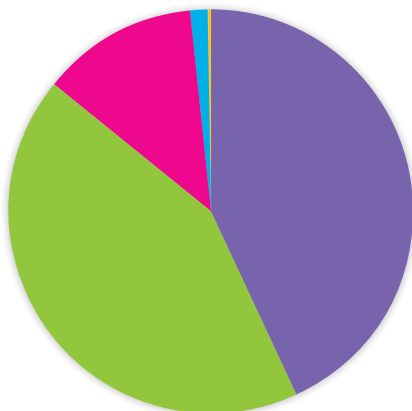


**TOTAL INCOME**  
**\$18,539,794**

- Room Tax \$14,968,298
- Development (Room Tax) \$1,837,513
- Program Income \$530,346
- Partnership \$478,950
- Safety Patrol \$33,337
- Other Income \$691,350

**TOTAL EXPENSES**  
**\$21,210,684**

- Marketing \$9,159,921
- Development \$9,091,098\*
- Administration \$2,697,377
- Partnership \$228,671
- Safety Patrol \$33,617



*\*Includes \$5.8 million for Elm Street Plaza construction and the \$3.2 million Development Grant.*





## ROOM TAX INCOME

# \$16,427,798



- Nov/Dec - Prior Year \$1,730,207
- 1st Quarter (Jan - Mar) \$3,257,271
- 2nd Quarter (Apr - Jun) \$3,649,899
- 3rd Quarter (Jul - Sep) \$5,666,497
- 4th Quarter (Oct Only) \$664,425
- Room Tax - Development Fund \$1,459,499

## MARKETING EXPENSES

# \$9,159,921



- Summer \$5,367,071
- Fall/Winter \$690,888
- Holiday \$351,213
- Winter/Spring \$1,267,458
- Year-Round \$1,134,726
- Meetings & Conventions and Sports \$93,788
- Public Relations \$254,778

# MARKETING & RESEARCH

## MARKETING

In 2023, we built on the equity of our “WordPlayful” advertising campaign, encouraging visitors to bring their friends, family, and fun to Wisconsin Dells.

As in previous years, both traditional and non-traditional media types were used to bring the messaging to life throughout each of our 16 markets. Finding new ways to capture audience attention continues to be a priority with innovative tactics like social media stickers and 3D outdoor boards. Hyper-segmenting continued to be a prevalent part of our strategy, extending beyond our core family audience to everyone from multi-gen to wellness enthusiasts to foodies, pet-friendly visitors, and beyond.

We also continued to leverage our sports partnerships, helping us gain additional exposure. Teaming up with Bally Sports, we were able to connect with key audiences in the Chicago, Minneapolis, and Milwaukee markets with features, interviews, and segments during Bucks, Brewers, Cubs, and Twins games, giving us plenty of added-value opportunities throughout.

## RESEARCH

In 2023, WDVCB conducted third-party research to measure the efficiency, effectiveness, and incremental impact of the 2023 Wisconsin Dells tourism marketing campaign.

The results of the Ad Awareness/Effectiveness research study indicated that the 2023 Media Plan delivered an efficient overall campaign. The research confirms the market segmentation and the messaging aligns with the Wisconsin Dells brand.



**545.6K**

incremental trips generated  
by Wisconsin Dells' campaign



**\$794**

spent by each incremental  
travel party in the area



**\$433.5M**

in incremental revenue was generated  
by Wisconsin Dells' campaign



**\$80**

returned to the local economy for  
each dollar invested in the campaign



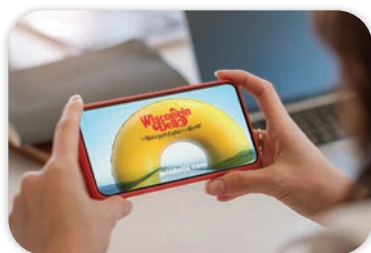


# MEDIA



## OUTDOOR

Digital • Programmatic • High Impact



## VIDEO

Targeted :30, :15 & :06 Spots  
Streaming • Cable • Live Sports

**16 MEDIA MARKETS**  
YEAR-ROUND ADVERTISING



## AUDIO

Traditional • Streaming  
Podcasts • Connected  
Home



## DIGITAL

Hyper-Targeted • Display • Mobile • Video  
High Impact • Paid Social • Paid Search



## WEBSITE

2023 TOTAL SITE VISITS

**3,367,469**

2023 NEW USERS

**2,586,208**

2023 WELCOME CENTER  
**INQUIRIES/CONTACTS**

**36,580**

**VACATION GUIDE  
DISTRIBUTION**



132,398 **2022** **2023** 159,970

# PR & SOCIAL MEDIA



**MAKING HEADLINES**  
WITH MAJOR PUBLICATIONS



**milwaukee  
journal sentinel**

**TRAVEL+  
LEISURE**

**yahoo!life**



**INFLUENCERS**  
ESTIMATED MEDIA VALUE  
**OVER \$2M**



**MEETINGS &  
CONVENTIONS,  
SPORTS & GROUPS**



# WISCONSIN DELLS FESTIVALS, INC.

Nothing attracts a crowd like a crowd, especially when everyone is having the kind of fun the Dells is known for. That's why our area festivals and events are so important. They keep giving visitors new reasons to experience what Wisconsin Dells has to offer. Here are a few of those exciting events that help make us a true year-round destination.

## MISSION

Wisconsin Dells Festivals, Inc. develops, executes, manages, and promotes festivals and special events to generate increased economic impact in the Wisconsin Dells area.



Dells Rare Barrel Affair  
April 22, 2023

Spring Wine Walk  
April 29, 2023



Fall Wine Walk  
October 7, 2023



Ugly Sweater Pub Crawl  
December 2, 2023

Thirsty Shamrock Pub Crawl & 5K  
March 11, 2023



Automotion Classic Car Show  
May 20-21, 2023



Dells On Tap Weekend  
October 13-14, 2023





# 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## WDVCB BOARD OF DIRECTORS



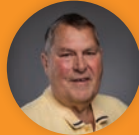
**Merije Ajvazi,**  
Board Vice Chair  
B-LUX Grill & Bar



**John Chastan, Board Chair**  
Kalahari Resorts  
& Conventions



**Jill C. Diehl,**  
President/CEO (Apr-Dec)  
Wisconsin Dells Visitor  
& Convention Bureau, Inc.



**Tom Diehl**  
Tommy Bartlett  
Exploratory



**Joe Eck**  
Wilderness Hotel  
& Golf Resort



**Dan Gavinski,**  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Dells Boat Tours®



**Brian Holzem**  
Original Wisconsin  
Dells Fudge



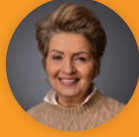
**Nick Laskaris**  
Mt. Olympus Water  
& Theme Park



**Kevin Ricks**  
Ripley's Believe It  
or Not! Museum



**Krissy Sigmund**  
AmericInn by Wyndham



**Romy Snyder,**  
President/CEO (Jan-Mar)  
Wisconsin Dells Visitor  
& Convention Bureau, Inc.



**Stacie Tollaksen**  
Ghost Out-Post  
Haunted House

## FESTIVALS BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Dave Abangan**  
Ho-Chunk Gaming,  
Wisconsin Dells



**John Chastan, Board Chair**  
Kalahari Resorts  
& Conventions



**Jesse DeFosse,**  
Board Vice Chair  
Showboat Saloon



**Jill C. Diehl,**  
President/CEO (Apr-Dec)  
Wisconsin Dells Visitor  
& Convention Bureau, Inc.



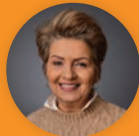
**Tom Diehl**  
Tommy Bartlett  
Exploratory



**Dan Gavinski,**  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Dells Boat Tours®



**Bernadette Skwor**  
Shamrock Motel



**Romy Snyder,**  
President/CEO (Jan-Mar)  
Wisconsin Dells Visitor  
& Convention Bureau, Inc.



# 2023 COMMITTEES

## BOARD NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Merije Ajvazi, Chair  
John Chastan  
Jill C. Diehl (Apr-Dec)  
Tom Diehl  
Dan Gavinski  
Romy Snyder (Jan-Mar)

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

John Chastan, Chair  
Merije Ajvazi  
Jill C. Diehl (Apr-Dec)  
Tom Diehl  
Dan Gavinski  
Romy Snyder (Jan-Mar)

## FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Dan Gavinski, Chair  
John Chastan  
Jill C. Diehl (Apr-Dec)  
Tom Diehl  
Brian Holzem  
Romy Snyder (Jan-Mar)

## MARKETING COMMITTEE:

Tom Diehl, Chair  
Dave Abangan  
Merije Ajvazi  
Jill C. Diehl (Apr-Dec)  
Joe Eck  
Adam Fisk  
Brent Gasser  
Dan Gavinski  
Brian Holzem  
Nick Laskaris  
Krissy Sigmund  
Romy Snyder (Jan-Mar)

## TOURISM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

Kevin Ricks, Chair  
John Chastan  
Jill C. Diehl (Apr-Dec)  
Tom Diehl  
Joe Eck  
Dan Gavinski  
Romy Snyder (Jan-Mar)  
John Webb  
Ed Wojnicz

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

Stacie Tollaksen, Chair  
Merije Ajvazi  
Jill C. Diehl (Apr-Dec)  
Aaron Matteson  
Trina McVicker  
Karen Reith-Hinze  
Romy Snyder (Jan-Mar)  
Shaun Sprysl

# CURRENT STAFF

## EXECUTIVE:

Jill C. Diehl  
President/CEO

Nichole Kocovsky  
COO/CFO

Wendy Fischer  
Executive Administrative  
Assistant

## ADMINISTRATION:

Trisha Gaffron  
VP of Administration

Brandee Douglas  
Distribution Coordinator

Mark Hemberger  
Maintenance Associate

Ryan Sawejka  
Web Application Developer/  
Database Administrator

Burnis Turner  
Director of IT & Operations

## FINANCE & ACCOUNTING:

Nicki Robinson  
Director of Accounting

## PARTNERSHIP & VISITOR SERVICES:

Vicky Galitz  
VP of Partnership &  
Visitor Services

Roxane Betancourt  
Visitor Services Representative

Tara Hensley  
Partnership Coordinator

Deb Schwartz  
Director of Partnership

Gail Torkelson  
Visitor Services Representative

Kaitlin Wagner  
Visitor Services Manager

Terry Welch  
Visitor Services Representative

## MARKETING:

Heidi Aalto  
Creative Marketing Director

Peter Davidson  
Graphics Specialist

Gracelyn Footit  
Marketing Coordinator

Kelsey Galbraith  
Digital/Social Content Creator

## WISCONSIN DELLS FESTIVALS, INC.:

Briana Faber  
Senior Festivals &  
Events Manager

Felipe Garcia, Jr.  
Festivals & Events Assistant/  
Elm Street Plaza Lead





# Wisconsin Dells®

Visitor & Convention Bureau

701 Superior Street | P.O. Box 390 | Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965

(608) 254-8088 | [wisdells.com](http://wisdells.com)