



National Office

Activity Report
2022 | Q2 April-June

ANNUAL MEETING

Preparation

- Several planning meetings held
- Meeting visuals created for communication and promotion
- Completion of the online Annual Meeting landing page
- Developed registration materials
- Promotional newsletters developed
- Agenda development
- Met with leaders/chairs from all 10 states with Anne to discuss topics for the State Dialog portion of the national meeting

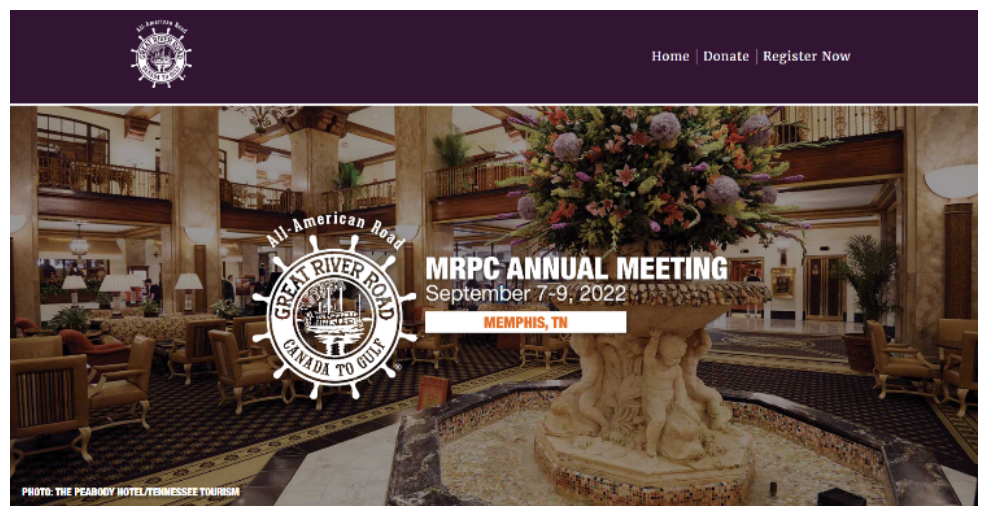
Meeting E-newsletters

6/8 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: Registration is now open for the 2022 MRPC Annual Meeting
- Sent to: Annual Meeting Contacts (616 recipients)
- Open rate: 43.8%
- Click rate: 9.1%

6/23 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: Reminder: Registration is now open for the Annual Meeting!
- Sent to: Annual Meeting Contacts (608 recipients)
- Open rate: 39.0%
- Click rate: 2.7%



JOIN US FOR THE MRPC ANNUAL MEETING THIS SEPTEMBER!

September 7-9, 2022
Memphis, TN

[Register Now](#)

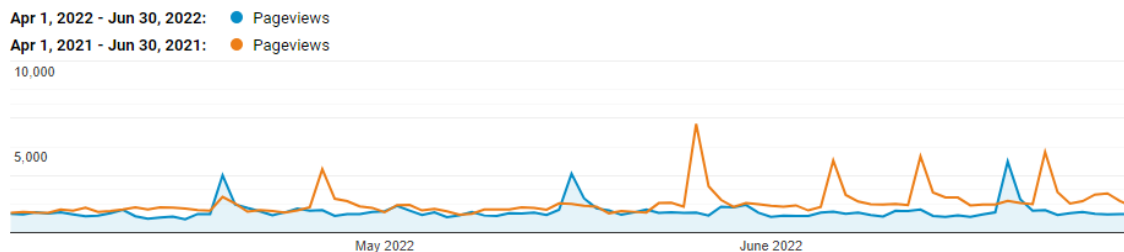
We're excited to welcome you to the Mississippi River Parkway Commission's first- in person meeting in three years (and the first since our designation as an All- American Road!)—register now for the 2022 Annual Meeting, which will be held September 7- 9, 2022, at the Peabody Hotel in Memphis, Tennessee.

Join us for educational sessions, engaging meetings, and celebration as we discuss the future of the Great River Road as an All- American Road and how our state commissions and technical committees can help us continue our efforts to

EXPERIENCMISSISSIPPIRIVER.COM WEBSITE

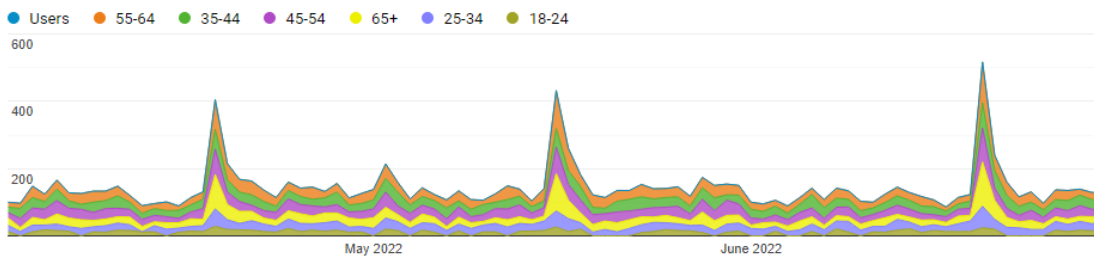
Takeaways

- The top visited and pages of interest in Q2 were:
 - Homepage 13,156
 - The Great River Road: The Best Drive in America 9,251
 - Order a Free Great River Road State Map 6,403
 - Note: We have been promoting map orders less this year compared to 2021 based on reworking the map and fulfillment administration
 - River Attractions 5,983
 - Locks and Dams of the Upper Mississippi (article) 5,803
- Overall pageviews in Q2 2022 (112,887)
- Overall site traffic was consistently higher last year in 2021 than in 2022 for Q2.



- Noticeable Q2 2021 spikes of traffic that caused higher #'s last year over this year
 - 5/25 - 5/29: An e-newsletter/article about scenic spots on the Great River Road spiked higher interest and traffic to the site.
 - 6/5 - 6/19 there was a mention in an article on thediscoverer.com (<https://www.thediscoverer.com/blog/5-best-routes-for-cross-county-road-trips/XvHyVpKgiwAG5a0X>) that drove 2,783 users (roughly 6000+ pageviews) to the site
- Site pageview acquisition sources:
 - Organic search made up 57.33% (26,648 users) of acquisitions in Q2
 - Direct traffic made up 28.01% (13,020 users) of acquisitions in Q2
 - Social media made up 8.56% (3,979) of acquisitions in Q2
 - Top 5 social media referral sources:
 - Facebook made up 97.01% of all social acquisition users (3,860 users)
 - Pinterest 1.43% (57)
 - Reddit 0.88% (35)

- Instagram 0.43% (17)
 - TripAdvisor 0.13% (5)
 - Referral traffic made up 6.10% (2,853) of acquisitions in Q2
- The increases and decreases in traffic from the top markets this quarter compared to last year at this time
 - Top 5 Metro Areas:
 - Chicago IL 4,866 Users (-1.70% from last year Q2)
 - Minneapolis-St. Paul MN 4,286 Users (-13.34%)
 - Milwaukee WI 1,962 Users (-0.41%)
 - St. Louis MO 1,643 Users (-12.19%)
 - New York, NY 1,496 Users (+48.56%)
- Site usage by age throughout the quarter



- The 55-64 age range was constantly higher throughout the quarter but there were no unusual spikes in usage. Almost every time the 55-64 age range spiked so did the other ranges.

Analytics

www.experiencemississippiriver.com/		
Total Pageviews	112,877	
Total Unique Pageviews	93,382	
Total Sessions	56,919	
Unique Users	45,692	
New Users	87%	
Returning Users	13%	
Pages Viewed Per Session	2	
Time Spent Per Page Visited	0:56	
Avg. Session Duration	1:51	
Top 10 Most Visited Pages	Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page
homepage	13,156	1:09
/the-great-river-road-the-best-drive-in-america/	9,251	1:38
/interactive-tools/order-a-free-great-river-road-10-state-map/	6,403	1:60
/river-attractions/	5,983	2:38
/locks-and-dams-of-the-upper-mississippi/	5,803	2:54
/app/	3,982	4:07
/take-a-trip-along-the-northern-great-river-road/	3,022	2:47
/explore-these-charming-mississippi-river-cities-towns/	3,009	2:50
/itineraries/	2,757	1:08
/interpretive-centers/	2,500	2:57
Top 10 Referring Sites	Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
facebook.com	4,169	0:39
thediscoverer.com	818	1:48
onlyinyourstate.com	405	2:00
www-onlyinyourstate-com.cdn.ampproject.org	380	1:06
(e-newsletters) us5.campaign-archive.com	213	3:06
tn.gov	190	1:15
kiddle.co	115	1:01
doityourselfrv.com	65	3:35
pinterest.com	62	1:42
parks.ky.gov	52	0:40

Top 10 Metro Areas		
	Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
Chicago IL	6,092	1:48
Minneapolis-St. Paul MN	5,116	1:43
Milwaukee WI	2,529	1:45
St. Louis MO	1,908	1:31
New York, NY	1,791	1:50
Dallas-Ft. Worth TX	1,327	1:36
La Crosse-Eau Claire WI	1,082	1:25
Washington DC (Hagerstown MD)	1,081	0:44
Atlanta GA	1,064	1:55
Top Channels		
	% Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
Organic Search	57.1%	2:03
Direct	29.4%	1:46
Social	7.6%	0:40
Referral	5.9%	1:50
User Demographics		
	% Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
Age		
55-64	20.5%	2:20
35-44	19.2%	1:52
45-54	19%	2:04
65+	17.3%	2:21
25-34	15%	1:56
18-24	9%	1:49
Gender	% Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
Male	50.5%	2:06
Female	49.5%	2:04
Device Usage		
	% Sessions	Avg. Session Duration
Mobile + Tablet	62.2%	2:01
Desktop	37.8%	2:21

Web Maintenance

- Monthly website checks
 - Tested and updated links as necessary
 - Checked copy and photos, ensured content was current
 - Monthly Mailchimp check to ensure lists are performing/functioning correctly
 - Renewing Instagram Tokens: Refreshing long-lived tokens before expiration, ensuring granted feed app permissions
 - Scanned the site for spam and security vulnerabilities
 - Renewed the instagram tokens
 - Updated plugins
- SEO/analytics monitored weekly
- Updated WordPress version
- Flipped website content to Summer on May 12th
- Created backups and restore points monthly

Web Updates

- Updated all of the info for the interpretive centers to match what was submitted on the the MRPC Members site
- Fixed a Javascript error that was breaking the jump to section functionality

Blog Posts

- 5/3 - Take a trip along the northern Great River Road
(<https://experiencemississippiriver.com/take-a-trip-along-the-northern-great-river-road/>)
- 6/6 - What to see & do along the southern Great River Road
(<https://experiencemississippiriver.com/what-to-see-do-along-the-southern-great-river-road/>)
- 6/28 - Find summer fun along the Great River Road
(<https://experiencemississippiriver.com/find-summer-fun-along-the-great-river-road/>)

MRPCMEMBERS.COM WEBSITE

Web Maintenance

- Updated plugins
- Updated WordPress version
- Fixed broken links
- Added security to improve email deliverability
- Created backups and restore points monthly

Web Updates

- Made adjustments to required fields on the IC Visits form
- Updated the Transportation table
- Worked on a bug that broke the MailChimp link to the site
- Created a MRPC Map feedback form
- Excluded partners from the state roster lists
- Added documents and meetings

(Website updates and maintenance on both sites, experiencemississippiriver.com and mrpcmembers, average 10 hours per month.)

TOURISM E-NEWSLETTERS *(Each monthly newsletters averages 5 hours)*

Takeaways

The MRPC e-newsletter continued to perform well in Q2, more than doubling the average click rate and nearly doubling the average open rate. Notably, none of the Q2 newsletters featured a promotion (traditionally, a big driver of opens and clicks), meaning our subscribers are interested in the content we're providing. We also continue to grow the number of subscribers, adding a little more than 1,000 in Q2.

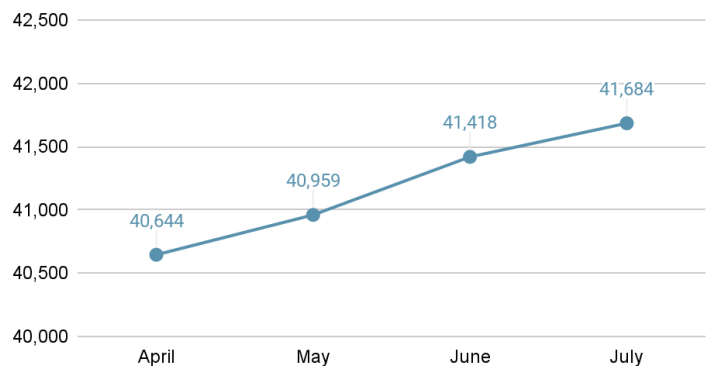
Results

- Average open rate: 40.7% (industry average: 20.4%)
- Average click rate: 4.5% (industry average: 2.2%)

4/18 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: Can't-miss parks and natural areas along the Great River Road
- Wrote article: Can't-miss parks and natural areas along the Great River Road
- Also promoted: Discover the Great River Road's Interpretive Center
- Open rate: 40.5%
- Click rate: 4.3%

E-newsletter Subscriber Growth



5/16 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: Take a trip along the northern Great River Road
- Wrote article: Take a trip along the northern Great River Road
- Also promoted: Locks and dams of the Upper Mississippi River
- Open rate: 41.5%
- Click rate: 4.8%

6/20 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: What to see & do along the southern Great River Road
- Wrote article: What to see & do along the southern Great River Road
- Also promoted: Explore these charming Mississippi River cities & towns
- Open rate: 40.2%
- Click rate: 4.5%

PILOT E-NEWSLETTERS

4/20 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: MRPC April newsletter
- Sent to: MRPC Current Roster (213 recipients)
- Open rate: 40.9%
- Click rate: 6.3%

5/18 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: MRPC May newsletter
- Sent to: MRPC Current Roster (211 recipients)
- Open rate: 36.6%
- Click rate: 7.3%

6/15 E-Newsletter

- Subject line: MRPC June newsletter
- Sent to: MRCP Current Roster (222 recipients)

View this email in your browser
Forward to a friend

Great River Road

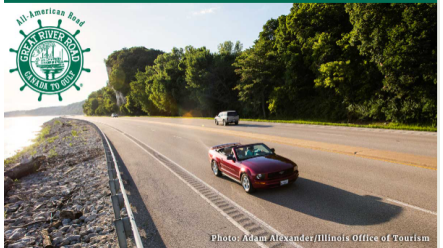
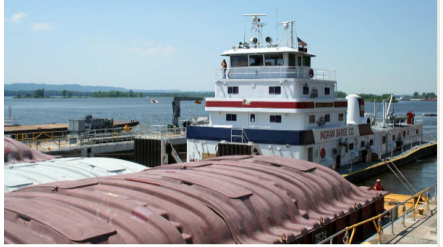


Photo: Adam Alexander/Illinois Office of Tourism

Take a trip along the northern Great River Road

It's a great time to take a ride along the Great River Road—the weather is getting warmer, and the scenery can't be beat. Here's a look at what to see and do along the northern half of the Great River Road All-American Road, from Minnesota to Missouri.

[Learn more](#)



Locks and dams of the Upper Mississippi River

You'll see nearly 30 locks & dams as you travel the Upper Mississippi River. These marvels of engineering help boats and barges navigate the upper stretches of the river and are quite a sight to behold—some even offer tours.

[Learn More](#)

Follow us on Instagram @greatriverroad

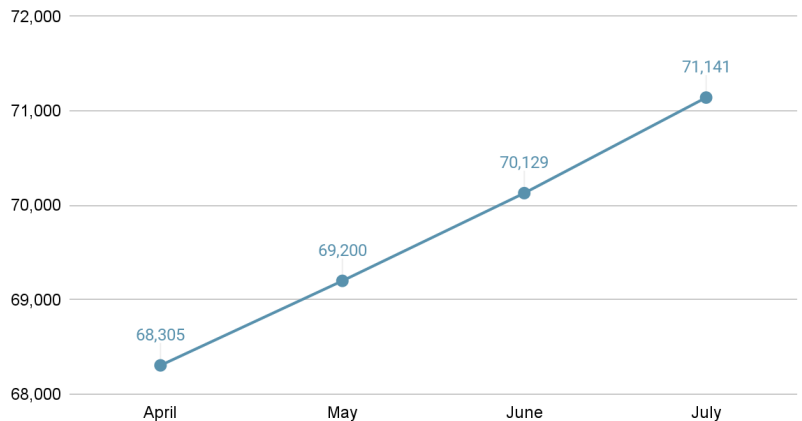
- Open rate: 32.6%
- Click rate: 1.8%

FACEBOOK

Takeaways

The Great River Road page continued to perform well in Q2, boosted by a successful advertising campaign. We added more than 2,800 fans in the quarter and had several successful posts (boosted by advertising dollars) that directed fans to the Great River Road website.

Facebook Fan Growth

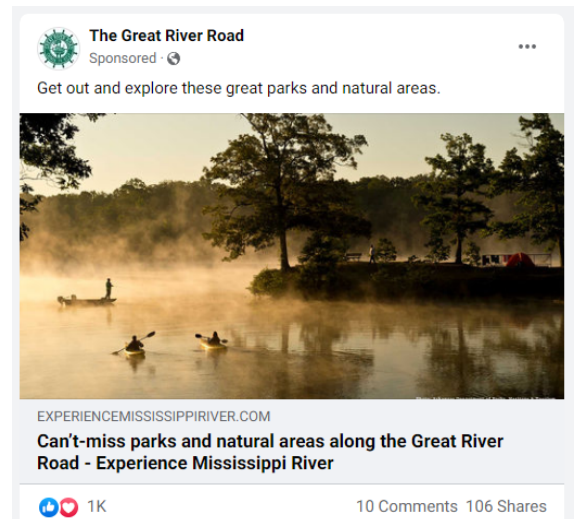


Overview

- Facebook fans: 71,141
- New Facebook fans: 2,836
- Facebook updates: 41

Top Posts

- 4/10
 - “Get out and explore these great parks and natural areas” w/link to blog on experiencemississippiriver.com
 - 43,458 people reached, 1,267 reactions, comments & shares, 609 post clicks
 - 5,425 people reached organically; 39,111 people via paid ad
- 5/23
 - “Looking for a great photo op along the Great River Road in Minnesota? Snap a pic with Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox in Visit Bemidji” w/photo
 - 26,546 people reached, 1,777 reactions, comments & shares, 1,011 post clicks
 - # people reached organically; # people via paid ad
- 6/20
 - “Get out and explore this summer” w/link to blog on

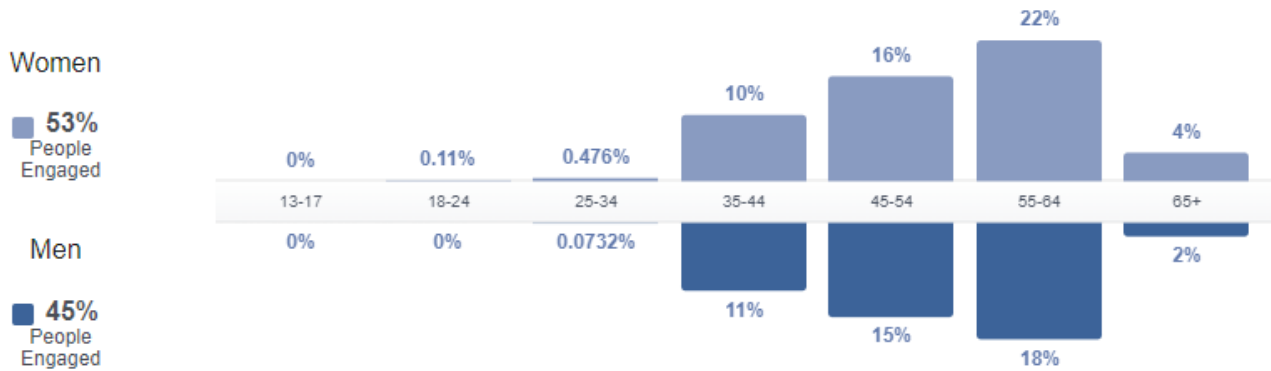


experiencemississippiriver.com

- 29,125 people reached, 1,075 reactions, comments & shares, 336 post clicks
- 3,466 people reached organically; 25,604 people via paid ad

Demographics/Engaged Fans

The number of People Talking About the Page by user age and gender. This number is an estimate.

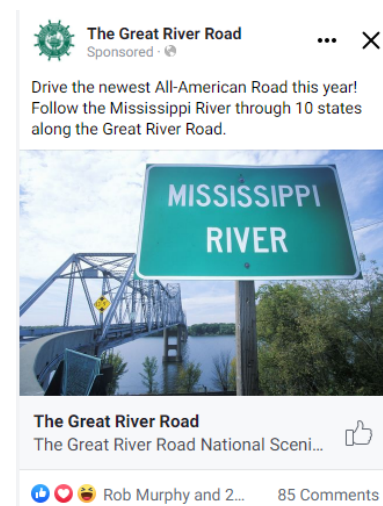


Page likes ad

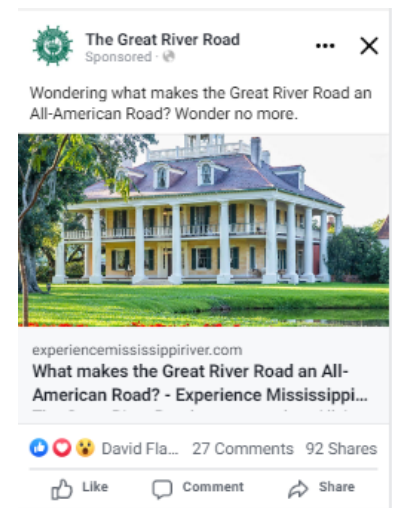
- Page likes ad - updated throughout the year
- 309,161 impressions
- 10,240 clicks
- 3.31% click-through rate
- Added 2,643 fans

Post engagement ad

- Post engagement ad - updated throughout year
- 273,298 impressions
- 9,674 clicks
- 3.54% click-through rate
- Received 8,703 post engagements



the



INSTAGRAM

Takeaways

We had a great quarter on Instagram gaining over 350 followers. The top 3 posts featured landscape photos of the All-American Road assets.

Overview

- Instagram followers: 3,564
- New Instagram followers: 354
- Instagram updates: 12 posts
- Regularly reviewed and replied to user messages

Demographics/Engaged Fans

- Top age range: 35-44 (27%)
- Top locations: Alton, Godfrey, Minneapolis, Chicago, St Louis
- Top gender: Women (60%)

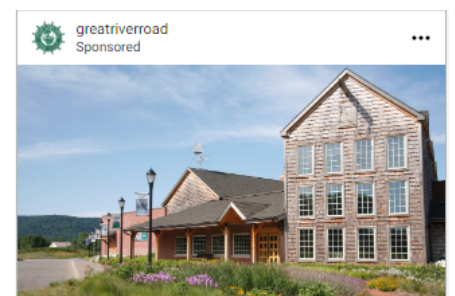
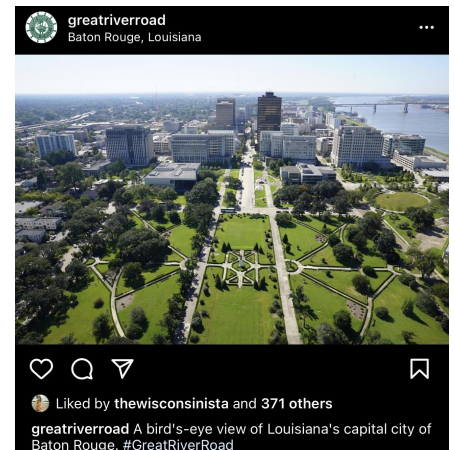
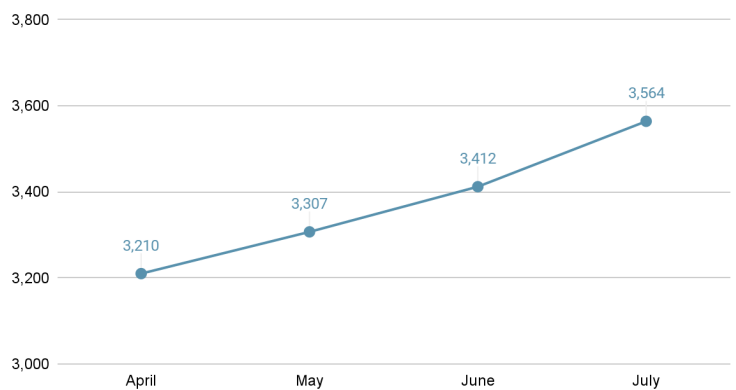
Top Posts

- 4/25
 - Caption: A bird's-eye view of Louisiana's capital city of Baton Rouge
 - 2,501 people reached, 382 reactions
- 6/1
 - Caption: Downtown Trempealeau is the gateway to Perrot State Park and has beautiful views of the mounds and the Mississippi River. The Trempealeau Hotel has made the city the heart of the region's music scene. Start your day exploring nature and end it with a concert!
 - 1,133 people reached, 136 reactions
- 6/15
 - Caption: The Mississippi River view from Effigy Mounds National Monument at Fire Pint is jaw-droppingly beautiful
 - 4,408 people reached, 729 reactions

Post engagement ad

- Post engagement ad - changes throughout year

Instagram Follower Growth



- 30,651 impressions
- 77 people clicked on the ad
- 0.25% click-through rate
- Received 2,885 post engagements

(Social media hours for developing content calendar, locating images, scheduling posts and creating ads averages 10 hours per month.)

DRIVE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD APP

ios

- # of downloads in Q2: 1,259
- # of downloads to date: 24,376

Android

- # of downloads in Q2: 726
- # of downloads to date: 12,242

Total (combined)

- # of downloads in Q2: 1,985
- # of downloads: 36,618

ADMIN/MISCELLANEOUS

Content Calendar

- Created Q3 content calendar detailing social media posts, e-news topics, ad budgets and goals.

Financial/Bookkeeping

- Paid bills
- Monitored state dues and related paperwork, communicated with states
- Completed multiple forms to collect dues from Illinois
- Processed donation checks and Stripe collections
- Monthly reconciliation
- Prepared financial reports for the board

Fulfillment ***(An average of 30 hours per month is spent managing fulfillment.)***

- Fulfilled 3,414 requests this quarter
- Pulled requests from database, created address and shipping labels and mailed

- Prepped guides for fulfillment - stuff envelopes, fold letters
- Answered phone calls, returned voicemails
- Corresponded to online inquiries

Internal E-newsletter Survey

- Emailed survey to members to decide Annual Meeting dates

Meetings - National Office

- 4/1 - NSB
- 4/4 - Pilot
- 4/20 - Pilot
- 4/22 - Transportation
- 4/29 - Pilot
- 4/29 - TN
- 5/4 - MS
- 5/5 - ERA
- 5/9 - KY (Norma)
- 5/11 - KY (Jim)
- 5/11 - WI
- 5/12 - AR (Kim)
- 5/16 - LA
- 5/17 - Culture and Heritage
- 5/19 - Marketing
- 5/24 - Redbirds
- 5/27 - MN
- 5/28 - IA
- 5/31 - MO
- 6/10 - Board
- 6/27 - Pilot

10-State Great River Road Promotional Map- *(National office spent over 126 hours.)*

- The new 10-state Great River Road promotional map was completed, approved by states and sent to print. The maps are available for request and were used for fulfillment during the summer tourism season. Redrew the map
- Contacted each of the interpretive centers (by email and phone - numerous times to many) to confirm the information we had on file numerous times.
- Followed up with state contacts repeatedly to assist in confirming interpretive center information

- Requested new state and interpretive center photos and created online locations to easily download files
- Shared drafts of map files and continued to update on ICs that responded

NSB Grant - (*National office spent over 80 hours.*)

- Worked with Arkansas to secure a state host for the grant
- Completed the letter of intent
- Conducted numerous meetings, drafts, to complete the grant application
- Solicited letters of support. Created draft letter and posted online with a location to download letters of support