



EXPLORE
**TWO
RIVERS**
WISCONSIN

TOURISM DIRECTOR

3737 E. Park Street
P.O. BOX 87
Two Rivers, WI 54243-0087

Tourism Director's Report May 2025

Community Outreach

Explore Two Rivers hosted the first **National Travel and Tourism Week** event on May 8th at Sepia Chapel. This event was attended by over 80 community members and featured a presentation by David Spiegelberg from Travel Wisconsin and a "Taste of Two Rivers" theme with businesses providing samples of local culinary products. At this event, Explore Two Rivers recognized retiring City Manager Greg Buckley, with the first annual Greg Buckley Community Advocacy Award. In addition, Explore Two Rivers Board members who have completed their terms of service were recognized.

Led by Two Rivers Parks and Recreation and in partnership with Two Rivers Main Street and Explore Two Rivers, the City of Two Rivers is one of the final communities being considered for the Recreation **Economy for Rural Communities Grant**. The RERC program provides planning assistance that helps communities identify strategies to grow their outdoor recreation economy and revitalize their Main Streets. If selected, Two Rivers would be the first community to receive this grant in Wisconsin.

In May, Explore Two Rivers started phase one of our **Dog Friendly Business Campaign**. Phase one included distributing window clings and developing a dog friendly directory of local businesses that pet owners can take advantage of. Phase two will include social media spotlight of these businesses. Phase three will be video shorts with visitors and their dogs visiting business in Two Rivers. Dog tourism in America is rapidly growing. The U.S. pet travel services market is expected to reach over \$1 billion by 2030, showing a compound annual growth rate of 8.1% from 2025 to 2030. This growth is fueled by several factors:

- Increased pet ownership and humanization: More and more Americans consider their dogs part of the family and want to include them in their travel plans.
- Availability of pet-friendly options: More hotels, airlines, and transportation companies are offering services and accommodations that cater to traveling pets, such as pet-friendly cabins and amenities.



www.exploretworivers.com



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- Advancements in pet travel infrastructure: Improvements in facilities and services, like specialized pet carriers and seamless travel arrangements, make it easier and safer for owners to travel with their dogs.
- Enthusiasm for post-pandemic travel: The surge in pet adoptions during the pandemic and the desire to travel after restrictions have led to increased interest in including pets in vacations.
- Younger generations' preferences: Millennials and Gen Z are more likely to travel with their pets and seek out pet-friendly experiences.

Marketing Initiatives

Collaboration with Travel Wisconsin continues to update the Two Rivers landing webpage, local attractions, and event listings.

A daily social media presence has been maintained with content on Facebook, Instagram, and Flickr.

Ads were completed and submitted for the summer issues of Worth the Drivers of Fox Cities magazine and Road Trip Wisconsin.

Distributed the new Explore Two Rivers Dog Friendly Business window clings and created a social media post to promote this program. A dog friendly directory of business was developed and will go live in June 2025.

Activities

05/01/2025 – Attended Two Rivers Business Association meeting.
05/02/2025 – Attended Wisconsin Harbor Towns Annual meeting
05/05/2025 – Attended Two Rivers City Council meeting.
05/07/2025 – Attended Visit Manitowoc's National Travel and Tourism Week breakfast.
05/08/2025 – Hosted National Travel and Tourism Week event at Sepia Chapel.
05/13/2025 – Explore Two Rivers Board of Directors meeting.
05/13/2025 – Participated in Recreation Economy for Rural Communities Interview with Two Rivers Parks and Recreation and Two Rivers Main Street.
05/14/2025 – Attended the Mishicot Business Association meeting.
Confirmed with MBA and MAGIC that we are moving forward on a shared full-page ad in Fox Cities magazine to highlight fall events in our area.
05/14/2025 – Attended Two Rivers Department Head's meeting.



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05/15/2025 and 05/16/2025 – Participated Destinations Wisconsin quarterly statewide meeting. Discussed tourism advocacy leading up the state budget deadline of July 1st and reviewed membership criteria.

05/19/2025 – Attended Two Rivers City Council meeting.

05/27/2025 – Met with Todd Nilson from Clocktower Advisors (also Explore Two Rivers Board member) and Dave Dossey from the City of Two Rivers IT Dept. to review Google analytics, social media analytics and to explore the capacity of our current website to increase traffic to exploretworivers.com.

05/28/2025 – Attended Two Rivers Department Head's meeting.

05/29/2025 – Attended community forum to meet the new City Manager candidates.

05/30/2025 – Participated in department heads portion of the new City Manager interview process.

Submitted June 11, 2025

Joseph L. Metzen

Tourism Director

Explore Two Rivers



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