

# Smart meetings

The Intelligent Way to Plan

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SPECIAL ISSUE

## RISE OF THE GEEKS

### #MEETINGS REVOLUTIONIZED

**Game On:  
Using Gamification at  
Your Next Event**

**Our Editors Pick Must-Have Apps**

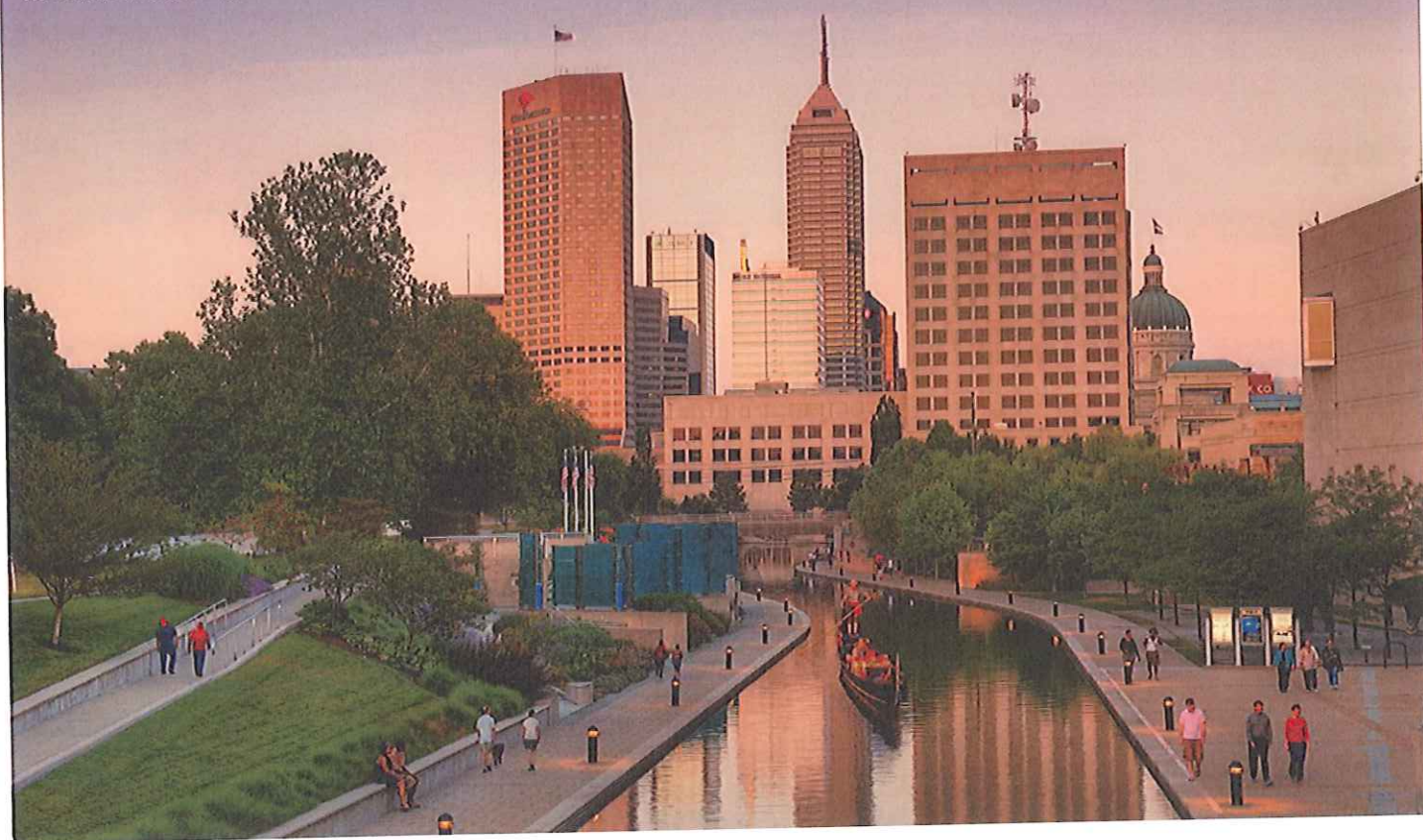
**Industry Watch: Hotel of the Future**

PLUS

**Sure Bet: Why Gaming  
Meccas Are Good for Meetings**



The Cultural Trail along Central Canal, Indianapolis



## Hoosier Hospitality Invites Exploration

This welcoming Midwest state is full of surprises | By HOLLY WOOLARD

**H**oosier hospitality is real. It's not just a catchy alliteration that Indiana residents toss around willy-nilly. Hoosiers take their hospitality seriously and frequently use the phrase when touting the benefits of holding meetings and events in The Hoosier State. Also the nickname of Indiana University athletic teams, the moniker "Hoosier" may have originated as a slang term for a rough countryman or backwards place, but has also been used to describe pioneering qualities such as self-reliance and bravery. Today, the Hoosiers embrace their roots with a welcoming spirit. Learn more about Indiana's best places to meet and unknown facts that make its cities special.

### EVANSVILLE

**Why we love it:** The downtown riverfront provides stunning views of the Ohio River and the opportunity to stroll, run or bike on the 6.5-mile paved path. It's also the site of free summer concerts and festivals.

**Standout feature:** Casino Aztar. Next month this complex will be re-branded as Tropicana Evansville, connecting it to its parent company. In addition to a riverboat casino, the property features the 250-room Casino Aztar Hotel, 96-room Le Merigot Hotel and Aztar Executive Confer-

ence Center, which offers 11,000 sq. ft. of indoor meeting space and 18,000 sq. ft. outdoors. The Casino Aztar Hotel recently underwent a \$7 million renovation to guest rooms and public areas in conjunction with the forthcoming name change.

**Convene here:** The Centre. The city's key conference facility is located downtown with 280,000 sq. ft. of meeting space. It features a 2,571-seat auditorium, 38,000-square-foot exhibit hall and 14,000-square-foot ballroom. Mesker Park Zoo provides several reception venues, including a plaza with fountains.

**Stay here:** Holiday Inn Evansville Airport. Renovated last year, it offers 8,358 sq. ft. of flexible meeting space and free Wi-Fi, breakfast and airport shuttle service. Clarion Inn is just a few minutes from downtown and is another hotel suitable for meetings and conventions, with 198 guest rooms, full-service catering and more than 16,658 sq. ft. of meeting space.

**Good to know:** Bosse Field, the fifth-oldest baseball park in the United States, was among the sites where the 1992 movie *A League of Their Own* was filmed. The park has retained the artwork promoting the Racine Belles, the girls baseball team depicted in the movie. The city is home to University of Southern Indiana and University of Evansville. The 11,000-seat Ford Center opened downtown in 2011.





## FORT WAYNE

**Why we love it:** Fort Wayne is in the heart of the Midwest. Although it has the second-largest population in the state at more than 250,000, it maintains the benefits of a smaller city, including affordability and safety. It was recently named the No. 5 safest city in the United States by InsuranceProviders.com and is a three-time All-American City as voted on by the National Civic League.

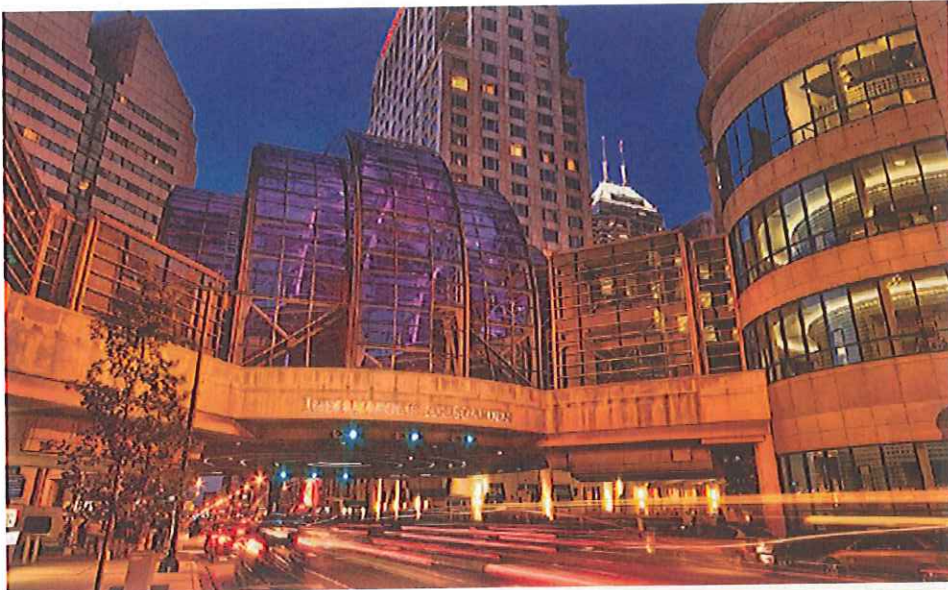
**Standout feature:** Convenience. Fort Wayne's key selling point is that it's within driving distance of many cities in Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Ohio. The downtown area conveniently packages Grand Wayne Convention Center (100,000 sq. ft. of meeting space) with adjoining hotels, nearby restaurants and entertainment options, including the historic 2,471-seat Embassy Theatre. Parkview Field (see pg. 160) is considered one of the best minor league baseball parks in the nation.

**Convene here:** Allen County War Memorial Coliseum. The city's signature facility features a 152,000-square-foot expo center and a 13,000-seat arena. The arena was home to the Fort Wayne Pistons of the NBA from 1952 to '57. The coliseum has hosted such eclectic entertainment as Jefferson Airplane, Liberace and Bob Dylan.

**Stay here:** Hilton Fort Wayne at the Grand Wayne Convention Center and Courtyard Fort Wayne Downtown at Grand Wayne Convention Center. The Hilton offers 244 guest rooms and the Courtyard has 250 guest rooms. For those meeting at the coliseum, the best option is the 151-room Holiday Inn Fort Wayne-IPFW & Coliseum down the street from Glenbrook Square and near entertainment and dining.

**Good to know:** The Genealogy Center at the Allen County Public Library is home to one of the nation's largest public genealogy collections and allows visitors to piece together family heritage with the help of a professional staff. Fort Wayne was the last of a series of forts built in 1794 and named after Revolutionary War statesman Gen. "Mad" Anthony Wayne.

*Above to below:* Indianapolis Artsgarden; University of Notre Dame football game, South Bend; Mesker Park Zoo, Evansville



## MEETING SPOTLIGHT

**Who:** OneAmerica Financial Partners, Inc.; 225 attendees

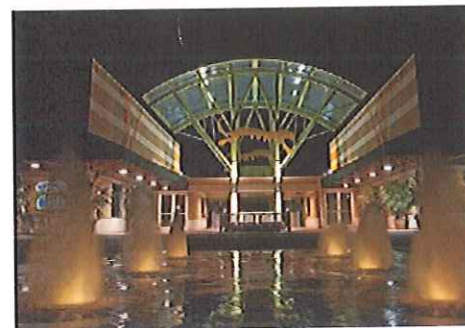
**What:** Annual National Sales Meeting

**When:** Feb. 10-13, 2013

**Where:** JW Marriott Indianapolis

**Why:** "I call Indianapolis the little, big city. The downtown offers so many different styles of restaurants, shops and unique museums all within walking distance and transfers aren't needed for many functions. And, the airport is only 20 minutes from downtown. Indianapolis is a remarkable value for the money."

—Kathy Wampler, meeting services manager



## FAST FACTS

**Population:** 6,537,334 (16th among U.S. states)

**State capital:** Indianapolis

**State nickname:** The Hoosier State

**State motto:** The Crossroads of America

**Unofficial state motto:** Restart your engines

**Ho ho ho:** Santa Claus, Ind., receives more than 500,000 letters each Christmas.

**Etymology:** The state name means "Land of

the Indians." The first inhabitants were Paleo-Indians around 8,000 B.C.

**Favorite sons & daughters:** David Letterman, James Dean, Red Skelton, C.J. Walker (among first self-made women millionaires)

**Good to know:** Wabash River, the longest free-flowing river east of the Mississippi, is the state river; "The Wabash Cannonball" is also the state song; Indiana is a Great Lakes state with 40 miles of shoreline on Lake Michigan.

## RESOURCES

**Evansville Convention & Visitors Bureau:** [evansvillecvb.org](http://evansvillecvb.org)

**Indiana Office of Tourism Development:** [in.gov/visitindiana](http://in.gov/visitindiana)

**Santa Claus, Indiana:** [santaclausin.com](http://santaclausin.com)

**Visit Fort Wayne:** [visitfortwayne.com](http://visitfortwayne.com)

**Visit Indy:** [visitindy.com](http://visitindy.com)

**Visit South Bend Mishawaka:** [visitsouthbend.com](http://visitsouthbend.com)





## Tip your Cap to the TinCaps

*Journey Stadium* magazine ranks **Parkview Field** in Fort Wayne as the No. 1 baseball ballpark experience in minor league sports. Located across from the Grand Wayne Convention Center, Parkview Field is home to the Fort Wayne TinCaps, a nickname that calls attention to the cooking pot Johnny Appleseed wore on his head. (Fort Wayne is the final resting place of the pioneering apple farmer/folk legend, and the city holds a festival in his honor every September.) Parkview Field can accommodate groups of up to 2,500 for picnics and games and features various rentable spaces, including suites and special viewing areas.



Above: Ford Center, Evansville; below: downtown skyline, Fort Wayne

Fort Wayne is at the confluence of the St. Joseph, St. Marys and Maumee rivers and was established as a trading post for European settlers.

## INDIANAPOLIS

**Why we love it:** The downtown area is remarkably easy to get around regardless of the season. Covered skywalks connect hotels to the primary meeting venues, and just for fun, there's an indoor shopping mall that is also accessible via the skywalks. Indiana's state capital is the 12th largest city in the country and is so popular with tourists and meeting attendees that it ranks among the top 25 most visited U.S. cities, with 18 million annual visitors.

**Standout feature:** Indianapolis Cultural Trail. This eight-mile trail is one of the coolest urban pathways in

the world, connecting the city's five cultural districts. It will hold its grand opening May 10-11. Whether meeting attendees bike, stroll or run the pathway, they will pass most major hotels, arts and entertainment venues and sports complexes. There's also \$2 million of public art on display along the trail.

**Convene here:** Indiana Convention Center. The convention center and adjacent Lucas Oil Stadium underwent a \$275 million expansion prior to the city hosting the 2012 Super Bowl and Indianapolis has never looked back. The convention center offers 566,000 sq. ft. of contiguous exhibit space and 83 meeting and ballroom spaces. "The Super Bowl put us on the map," says Lisa Wallace, Visit Indy communications manager for conventions and meetings. "The amount of leads, the number of bookings—it's been incredible."

**Stay here:** The Alexander. The city's newest hotel, which opened in January, is so close to Bankers Life Fieldhouse that it has become a favorite among NBA teams, including the Miami Heat. The LEED Silver hotel features 146 guest rooms, 11 suites, 52 residential units and 16,500 sq. ft. of meeting space. Art installations, including colorful lighting in the bar, create a trendy cosmopolitan vibe. The 33-story JW Marriott Indianapolis, which opened in 2011, is the tallest building in the state. It has 1,005 rooms and 103,000 sq. ft. of meeting space.

**Good to know:** If you love sports, you'll love Indianapolis. The 67,000-seat Lucas Oil Stadium is home to the Colts of the NFL. The 18,165-seat Bankers Life Fieldhouse is home to the Indiana Pacers of the NBA and Indiana Fever of the WNBA. Indianapolis Motor Speedway is the world's largest sporting spectator facility with more than 250,000 permanent seats. This year, the Indy 500 is May 26 and the NASCAR Brickyard 400 is July 28. The NCAA Hall of Champions and Conference Center features exhibits and meeting and reception facilities.

## SOUTH BEND

**Why we love it:** University of Notre Dame is one of the most prominent institutions of higher learning in the United States and annually draws thousands of visitors to South Bend, which is located just south of Michigan and 96 miles east of Chicago. It's probably

a good idea to avoid holding an event on weekends when the Fighting Irish are playing home football games at their 80,795-seat stadium. But then again, there's so much happening before, during and after game day that meeting attendees may vote to head to South Bend regardless, just to brag about the experience. There's nothing like tailgating to promote company bonding.

**Standout feature:** East Race Waterway. The first artificial white-water course in North America covers approximately 2,000 feet on the St. Joseph River. Located in the heart of downtown, this convenient and exciting recreational venue offers safe and exciting fun. The waterway is open June through mid-August. Meeting attendees can rent four- and six-person Fnyaks for a team-building activity.

**Convene here:** Century Center South Bend. Located next to the St. Joseph River, it offers 75,000 sq. ft. of meeting space. An outdoor tented area is great for receptions. Century Center is connected by a heated walkway to the 291-room DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel South Bend, which is expected to complete a \$14 million renovation this month. The downtown Morris Performing Arts Center is available for receptions and meetings. Built in 1921 with European-inspired design, it features the 2,565-seat Leighton Theater and Grand Lobby, which can hold 500 for receptions. The opulent Palais Royale ballroom, next door, can seat 850 for banquets.

**Stay here:** Morris Inn at Notre Dame. Located on the Notre Dame campus, it will reopen in August after a 10-month, \$40 million renovation. The largest current hotel project in the state, Morris Inn will expand to 150 rooms, with three new private dining rooms and a 300-seat ballroom. It is seeking LEED Silver certification. The Notre Dame Conference Center, which provides 23,991 sq. ft. of meeting space, is accessible via an underground concourse.

**Good to know:** The greater South Bend region offers a cultural mix that includes University of Notre Dame as the flagship of major Catholic universities; the World Pulse Festival, an annual Christian music event; and nearby Amish and Mennonite communities. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the region offers wineries, casinos and a bevy of downtown entertainment options, including pub tours.

Parkview Field photo: Visit Fort Wayne



EVANSVILLE		ROOMS/MEETING SPACE	WHAT'S DISTINCTIVE
Casino Aztar Hotel	250 rms/22,000 sq. ft.		Attached to the first gaming riverboat permitted in Indiana; 11 meeting and conference rooms; \$7 million renovation recently completed.
Clarion Inn	198 rms/20,000+ sq. ft.		Ideal location near University of Southern Indiana, University of Evansville, Ford Center and Mesker Park Zoo; Tropical Pavilion has 6,386 sq. ft. of space.
Holiday Inn Evansville Airport	200 rms/8,358 sq. ft.		Renovated in 2012; upgrades include the fitness room, lobby and guest rooms; the 7,872-square-foot ballroom can accommodate 1,000.
Le Merigot Hotel	96 rms/20,000 sq. ft.		City's first luxury boutique hotel; adjoins Casino Aztar; deluxe suites available with oversize spaces designed by Los Angeles' Laurence Lee.
FORT WAYNE			
Courtyard Fort Wayne Downtown at Grand Wayne Convention Center	250 rms/6,000 sq. ft.		The largest hotel in Fort Wayne is connected to the Grand Wayne Convention Center; nearby 24/7 Starbucks and view of Parkview Field.
Don Hall's Guesthouse Hotel	121 rms/4,816 sq. ft.		The whole place is a spin-off of an iconic local restaurant; guest house includes multiple breakout rooms, lounge, live entertainment and hospitality suites for meetings.
Hilton Fort Wayne at the Grand Wayne Center	244 rms/6,000 sq. ft.		Complemented by an additional 100,000 sq. ft. at the attached Grand Wayne Convention Center; 2 restaurants, 2 lounges; walking distance to attractions.
Holiday Inn Fort Wayne-IPFW & Coliseum	151 rms/6,000 sq. ft.		Adjacent to Indiana-Purdue University Fort Wayne and the Coliseum; features the city's largest indoor pool; fitness center and hot tub/spa.
Hotel Fort Wayne	222 rms/18,500 sq. ft.		Formerly Fort Wayne Marriott; luxury hotel retains award-winning Red River Steakhouse and Rum Runners Lounge.
INDIANAPOLIS			
Conrad Indianapolis	241 rms/15,000 sq. ft.		A luxury hotel that has been named among <i>Conde Nast Traveler's</i> Readers Choice Top 100 U.S. Hotels; skybridge connects meeting rooms and convention center.
Crowne Plaza at Historic Union Station	273 rms/55,000 sq. ft.		A Romanesque revival-style hotel listed on the National Register of Historic Places; authentic Pullman train car rooms are decorated with period decor.
Hyatt Regency Indianapolis	499 rms/35,000 sq. ft.		Connected to convention center via a climate-controlled skywalk; the revolving Eagle's Nest restaurant is on the 20th floor and provides 360-degree views.
JW Marriott Indianapolis	1,005 rms/103,000 sq. ft.		The centerpiece of \$450 million Marriott Place, it's the largest JW Marriott in the world and the tallest hotel in Indiana (33 floors); features impressive ballroom.
Omni Severin Hotel	424 rms/17,000 sq. ft.		AAA Four Diamond luxury hotel in the heart of downtown; opened in 1913 as Grand Hotel of Indianapolis and features an original chandelier and marble staircase.
Renaissance Indianapolis North Hotel	263 rms/14,500 sq. ft.		Located in Carmel; inspired by neighboring arts and design district, with modern design and creative spaces mixed with advanced technology.
Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel at Keystone Crossing	395 rms/30,000 sq. ft.		Recent \$12 million renovation to the 12-story tower; connected to 100 stores at Fashion Mall via a climate-controlled skywalk.
The Alexander	157 rms/16,500 sq. ft.		The city's newest hotel is teeming with artwork; award-winning artist Jorge Pardo designed the artwork in the Plat 99 bar; ballroom and concourse great for receptions.
The Westin Indianapolis	573 rms/39,000 sq. ft.		Close to all downtown attractions, including Lucas Oil Stadium, Indianapolis Artsgarden, USS Indianapolis Memorial and Monument Circle; in-room massage available.
University Place Conference Center & Hotel	278 rms/29,104 sq. ft.		AAA Four Diamond, Forbes Four Star center offers urban-chic style and high-tech accents; complex includes the city's only IACC-certified conference center.
SOUTH BEND			
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel South Bend	291 rms/26,025 sq. ft.		Completion of \$14 million renovation expected this month; Grand Ballroom has 13,888 sq. ft. of space; connected to Century Center.
Hilton Garden Inn South Bend	100 rms/15,000 sq. ft.		Hotel features Bistro 933 restaurant and fully equipped fitness center; Gillespie Conference Center is next to hotel.
Inn at St. Mary's	150 rms/1,220 sq. ft.		Nestled on Saint Mary's College campus near University of Notre Dame; luxury hotel is next to Gillespie Conference Center, which has an 8,400-square-foot ballroom.
Morris Inn at Notre Dame	148 rms/6,559 sq. ft.		Property on University of Notre Dame campus will reopen in August after renovation; underground concourse connects hotel to Notre Dame Conference Center.