

TourismMarketing Today

The Official Newsletter of Destinations Florida | www.DestinationsFlorida.org | December 2023



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Remembering Harold Wheeler



Harold Wheeler

Destinations Florida members are remembering a dedicated role model in Harold Wheeler, retired director of the Monroe County TDC,

who passed away on October 31. He was 76.

Harold was a native Floridian who spent 21 years of his distinguished career promoting tourism to the Florida Keys and Key West. He was born in Tampa, raised in Sebring, and after serving in the U.S. Coast Guard stationed in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, during the Vietnam War, he graduated from the University of North Carolina-Wilmington and built a career in recreation, athletics, and tourism, with positions in North Carolina, Texas, and Florida.

After serving as executive director of the South Padre Island CVB (Texas), he returned to Florida in 1996 to become the director of the Monroe County TDC in Key West. He served in this position until his retirement in 2017.



Incoming FADMO Chairman Lee Daniel (2015) presents Harold Wheeler with a plaque recognizing his service to the association as chairman, 2014-15.

HAROLD WHEELER continues on pg. 4

Community Support

by Robert Skrob



You'd be proud of the presentations that Visit Orlando Chair Terry Prather and CEO Casandra Matej gave

to demonstrate the value of tourism marketing to the community at the November 14 Orange County Commission meeting. I had the honor to attend the meeting together with an audience full of Visit Orlando supporters.

And yet there were so many capital projects competing for funding that the county commissioners resolved to

E.D.'s MESSAGE... continues on pg. 3

Support from our partners makes Destinations Florida's industry & legislative representation possible

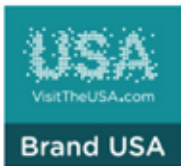
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HAPPY Birthday

Nerissa Okiye
December 7

Darien Schaefer
December 17

Nicole Stacey
December 28

Gil Langley
January 22

DESTINATIONS FLORIDA TourismMarketing Today

The Official Newsletter of
Destinations Florida
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MaryLu Winchester,
Member Database

On the Cover

Hugging the Florida-Georgia border on the Atlantic Ocean, Amelia Island boasts 13 miles of scenic shoreline graced by two award-winning resorts: the Omni Amelia Island Resort (pictured) and The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island, both offering world-class dining, golf, and other amenities, and favorite options for unforgettable island escapes.

negotiate a budget reduction with Visit Orlando. And, yes, those projects are arguably within the current allowable uses of the Tourist Development Tax.

Beyond those projects, the board chair reported he's going to promote expanding the uses of the TDT to the Florida Association of Counties. Even though there are record collections, there are also more potential projects competing for funds.

The tourism industry in Orange County is united in support for Visit Orlando and will continue to educate county commissioners to continue to advocate for full funding.

Could you depend on similar support from the industry within your community?

Individually within your community and together as an industry, we will be successful to the extent we are able to engage our community to advocate for tourism marketing with state and local elected officials.

To help grow that support, we've created a new industry engagement toolkit. It provides

you with scripts, handouts, and other tools to encourage your industry to engage in the advocacy process. Visit DestinationsFlorida.org/AdvocacyToolkit to take advantage of those resources to engage your community between now and the end of the year. Yes, everyone is busy, but now is better than next month (or never).

Other advocates are meeting with lawmakers this month and promoting their new initiatives that target your funding to pay for it. To stop them and to protect funding for tourism marketing, we've got to be better, more consistent advocates.

The individuals within your community who depend on tourism for their livelihoods need our best effort to protect tourism marketing funding and their jobs. Let's do this for them.

If you have any questions or don't know where to start, please reach out to Jennifer Fennell at CoreMessage or to me to make sure you and your team have what you need.

Thank you for your hard work! I know it's not easy.



A presentation slide during the November 14 Orange County Commission meeting depicts what UK travelers associate most with travel—illustrating the global competition Orlando/Orange County faces in attracting visitors.

Rita Irwin, longtime chairperson of the Monroe County TDC, worked with Wheeler and remembers him fondly, saying, "Harold was a very dedicated member of the team. When the Keys faced an emergency like a hurricane, he kept his eye on the ball and continued to look out for both the citizens and our guests calmly and efficiently. Even with all of us scattered around the state, daily phone meetings were happening (way before Zoom!). His contribution to the fabulous Florida Keys' tourism industry was significant, and I appreciated working with him."

Wheeler was a past chairman (2014-15) of Destinations Florida (then known as FADMO), a member of the Governor's Commission on Tourism for eight of his years at the TDC, and also served on the board of directors of VISIT FLORIDA for 10 years.

Among other honors, he received the Margo Golan Community Service Award from the Lodging Association of the Florida Keys and Key West in 2011.

His involvement in the industry serves an example to those who followed him.

Destinations Florida Chairman Santiago Corrada, president and CEO of Visit Tampa Bay, commented, "Some of us are here doing what we do because we had inspiration from incredible role models like Harold. The way he behaved and carried himself set an example for many of us to follow. We must never forget the contributions made in our industry by those that have preceded us. I would venture to say it is our responsibility to carry out the legacy and professionalism exhibited by those like Harold."

JOIN US FOR FLORIDA TOURISM DAYS at the Capitol Tallahassee, Florida January 30-31, 2024



January 30, 2024

2-5 pm – Destinations Florida Board of Directors Meeting
5-6:30 pm – Destinations Florida Welcome Reception

January 31, 2024

8:30-9:30 am – Registration/Breakfast
9:30-11:30 am – Tourism Rally/Partner Briefing
11:30 am – Luncheon
1-5 pm – Destinations Florida Member Appointments at the Capitol

This is your chance to speak with legislators at the Capitol to discuss the issues that are important to DMOs.

Accommodations Cut-Off Date: January 9, 2024

- AC Hotel by Marriott Tallahassee, (850) 392-7700, \$379, mention Destinations Florida Tourism Day Jan. 2024
- Courtyard by Marriott Tallahassee Downtown/ Capitol, (850) 222-8822, \$229, mention Destinations Florida Tourism

Register today at
DestinationsFlorida.org/24TourismDay



New 'Penny' Procedures

by Steven M. Hogan

Last year, we ran a series of Legal Tips articles discussing the six "pennies" that can be levied under section 125.0104, Florida Statutes (the TDT statute). Each penny represents 1% of the TDT that can be imposed under the TDT statute. The articles discussed how each penny can be levied by a county and what each penny can be used for.

The latest revision to the TDT statute changed the ways that some of the pennies can be levied by a county. Below is a list of each penny, the statutory section it corresponds to, and notes

about changes (if any) in how a county can levy the penny as of July 1, 2023:

As summarized below, imposing the additional "pennies" will now generally involve a referendum. As always, legal counsel should be sought on specific questions impacting your county.



Steven M. Hogan

The "Penny"	Statutory Section	Change in 2023 TDT Statute
No. 1	§ 125.0104(3)(c)	No change to levy methodology.
No. 2	§ 125.0104(3)(c)	No change to levy methodology.
No. 3	§ 125.0104(3)(d)	Removes option to impose via "extraordinary vote of the governing board." Now requires referendum.
No. 4	§ 125.0104(3)(l)	Removes option to impose via "majority vote of the governing board of the county." Now requires ordinance approved by referendum.
No. 5	§ 125.0104(3)(m)	Removes option to impose via "majority vote of the governing board of the county." Now requires ordinance approved by referendum.
No. 6	§ 125.0104(3)(n)	Removes option to impose via "a majority plus one vote of the membership of the board of county commissioners." Now requires ordinance approved by referendum.



Steven M. Hogan is a shareholder with the Ausley McMullen law firm in Tallahassee. Destinations Florida has retained Mr. Hogan to consult with our members on the Tourist Development Tax and related legal issues. You can contact Mr. Hogan at shogan@ausley.com. Nothing in this article constitutes legal advice. Please seek counsel of your own choosing before making decisions that impact yourself or your organization.

Amelia Island CVB's Gil Langley Presents Legislative Positions to Local Lawmakers

One of the best times for tourism promoters to meet with their area lawmakers is during local delegation meetings. This type of advocacy is especially critical this year as we expect proposed legislation that will affect the current permissible uses of the Tourist Development Tax.

Gil Langley, president and CEO of Amelia Island CVB, made a presentation to the Nassau County delegation—Representative Dean Black and Senator Clay Yarborough—on October 25. In addition to sharing Destination Florida's positions on the many issues facing the Florida Legislature this year, Langley explained that their support of tourism generates tax dollars that provide resources for them to fund all the requests they had received during the

meetings for earmarks. Both lawmakers committed to provide assistance if needed to help ensure the TDT continues to be used to promote tourism in Florida.

Destinations Florida recently updated its legislative advocacy materials and urges members to use these tools to promote the tourism industry when meeting with their local legislators. Reach out to Jennifer Fennell at jennifer@coremessage.com or click on DestinationsFlorida.org/AdvocacyToolkit for your

copy of the Tourism Promotion Legislative Action Plan and Toolkit and more.



Representative Dean Black, Gil Langley, and Senator Clay Yarborough

NOTEWORTHY

Paul Beirnes Joins Amelia Island CVB

The Amelia Island CVB (AICVB) has hired Florida tourism veteran Paul Beirnes as vice president of the organization, effective November 20. His appointment was officially announced at the November 1 meeting of the Amelia Island TDC.

"Paul has an impressive track record in tourism and brings an equally impressive set of marketing and leadership skills to his new position on Amelia Island," said Gil Langley, president and CEO of AICVB. "His depth of experience across the tourism sector gives Paul a clear understanding of the challenges facing the entire industry and a keen appreciation for Amelia's unique attributes and assets. We're very excited to welcome him to the team."

According to Langley, as vice president, Beirnes will have the opportunity to help take the organization and the destination to

the next level, with responsibilities spanning all aspects of tourism marketing, program development, and more.

"Amelia Island is an amazing destination with a fiercely loyal fan base, an active and engaged community of hospitality professionals, and an award-winning CVB committed to preserving the tourism industry for the benefit of this community," said Beirnes. "I look forward to working with Gil and his remarkable team as we explore new ways to responsibly promote Amelia Island to the world."



Paul Beirnes

Highly accomplished as an innovative destination marketing and brand strategist, Beirnes was most recently executive director of the Naples, Marco Island, Everglades CVB since 2020, where he played an integral role in nearly doubling Tourist Development Tax collections, successfully leading the destination through the pandemic and recovery from Hurricane Ian. During his time in Naples, he was named one of the Top 25 Extraordinary Minds for 2022 by Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMAI).

Prior to Naples, Beirnes was director of destination marketing with Hilton Worldwide, representing the 18 brands within Hilton's corporate portfolio. Before joining Hilton, Beirnes was director of global marketing and partnership marketing for 16 years with Visit Orlando. He also spent more than 10 years in leadership roles in The Walt Disney Company's marketing division. Additionally, Beirnes serves on the Board of Directors of the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association and is a recipient of the 2022 HSMAI President's Award (Recovery Campaign). He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Guelph in Canada.



Gil Langley, Rudy Webb of Paradise Advertising, and Paul Beirnes at the 2023 Destinations Florida Annual Meeting

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- Levy County Visitors Bureau
- Suwannee County Tourist Development
- Visit Gainesville, Alachua County
- Visit Lake City
- Visit Tallahassee
- Wakulla County Tourist Development Council

There Is More to Explore in 2024 in Levy County

The Levy County Visitors Bureau is getting the word out to potential visitors: The Heart of Florida's Nature Coast is waiting for you!

The bureau is working with a "We are Open" campaign that launched early this month, and the inviting language of the campaign beckons visitors to see all there is to explore in Levy County in 2024:

From the moment you enter Levy County, the beauty of this natural paradise surrounds your senses. Sunlight filters through the towering trees in a cathedral-like forest where rare wildlife flourish. Porpoises play in the secluded saltwater marshes while gentle manatees swim in the winding rivers. Discover ancient Native American culture, a coastal artistic village, or clear nature springs; it's all waiting! Our rich history and natural beauty come together to create an oasis hidden among fast-paced cities and theme parks.



It's always a good time to relax along Florida's Nature Coast.
Photo: Pat Bonish



Dripping Spanish moss is a signature look of Levy County.
Photo: Pat Bonish



The Sippin' Seven Alachua County Ale Trail Celebrates Amazing Year of Raising Awareness of the County's Award-Winning Craft Breweries

Beginning November 2022, Alachua County partnered with its seven local award-winning craft breweries to launch the Sippin' Seven gamified digital passport. The passport and the promotional campaign for the trail increased awareness of the destination's outstanding breweries and successfully expanded the consumer base of travelers looking for authentic brews paired perfectly with local culture.

Visit Gainesville, Alachua County worked closely with Waymaker Communications to develop a logo depicting local iconography from Payne's Prairie Preserve State Park—a truly unique Florida attraction featuring some of the state's top birding spots and home to a long-standing herd of free-roaming American Bison. Campaign assets included a website landing page; social, browser-based, and display ads; print ads; radio spots; billboards; activation events; and the Sippin' Seven on Tap e-newsletter.

The campaign was highly successful yielding 14,403 brewery check-ins from 3,427 passholders with 53% of passholder sign-

ups from outside of Alachua County. Sign-ups came from 18 states and Canada. Advertising and marketing impacts included 93,040 views of the Sippin' Seven landing page on the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County website, 2.4 million advertising exposures via digital display ads, brand exposure to millions of travelers along I-75 and in The Villages via billboards placed within one hour or less of Alachua County, and more.



Sippin' Seven Alachua County Ale Trail and its digital passport are drawing customers to Alachua County's seven craft breweries.



Visit Lake City Celebrates a Successful Year

"Visit Lake City has been very busy this year," said Kim Goldsmith, marketing manager for Columbia County Tourist Development. "We were excited to announce that we became a certified VISIT FLORIDA Welcome Center. We were also the first rural county selected to participate in VISIT FLORIDA's sponsored video and photo shoot. We hope to build upon these accomplishments and welcome more visitors to Lake City in the New Year."

Highlights from the year include:

- The VISIT FLORIDA team recently spent time in Columbia County meeting and capturing many of the county's wonderful tourism partners. Columbia County was chosen by VISIT FLORIDA as the first county of its size to participate in a complimentary content series. A 60-second video was produced and distributed to demonstrate just a sample of what visitors can do while visiting Columbia County.
- Visit Lake City recently completed a weeklong photo and video shoot, capturing shots of Columbia County's state and county parks, as well as lodging and dining partners. These assets will be incorporated into Visit Lake City's FY24 media campaign assets.
- The DMO ran a robust media campaign in FY23, complete with local TV segment interviews from both Jacksonville and Tampa, digital media, print, and more.
- Representatives of Visit Lake City attended the I-75 Welcome Center Showcase.



Cycle Here Media with owner Donald Jones conducts an on-site photo shoot in Columbia County with Kim Goldsmith, marketing manager for Columbia County Tourist Development.



Kim Goldsmith and Michelle Moore at the I-75 Welcome Center Showcase in Jennings, Florida, on October 28



BEST of NORTH FLORIDA!

Tallahassee Has Something to 'Bragg' About Leading Into the Historic Bicentennial Celebration!

Visit Tallahassee has plenty to celebrate, including another year of growth across visitation, occupancy, ADR, Rev Par, TDT collections, and a record-breaking \$1.25 billion in economic impact.

This month, VISIT TALLAHASSEE and Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU) will host all nine classifications



Visit Tallahassee, FAMU Athletics, and FHSAA staff announce FHSAA Football State Championships.

of the 2023 Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) Football State Championships at Ken Riley Field at Bragg Memorial Stadium. The event is expected to bring more than 30,000 student-athletes, coaches, and fans to Tallahassee, generating an estimated economic impact of over \$11 million.

The stage is set for a truly historic year ahead as Tallahassee enters its 200th anniversary in 2024 with a year-round lineup of events and activities. Working with community leaders and partners, Visit Tallahassee is leading the efforts to honor the story of Florida's Capital City.

"The Bicentennial is more than just an anniversary. It's a unique opportunity to share and celebrate our community's rich history, aspirations, and accomplishments," said Visit Tallahassee Executive Director Kerri L. Post.



Tallahassee will celebrate its bicentennial with year-round events and activities in 2024.

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CRAFTING A DMO TEAM FOR INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT



COMPILED FROM RESOURCES AND
COMMENTS SHARED AT THE ANNUAL
MEETING ON OCTOBER 12, 2024

Contributors



JENNIFER ADAMS

Destin
Fort Walton Beach, FL



PAUL BEIRNES

Naples, Marco Island,
Everglades Convention
& Visitors



MISTY JOHANTGEN

Experience Kissimmee

INTRODUCTION

For a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) to thrive, it's crucial to foster a strong, united, and vocal local community of industry leaders. Each member acts as a tourism promoter within their community, balancing the needs of local elected leaders, members of the tourism industry, and their team.

Effective DMOs recognize that having the right team in place is key to relationship building, and can mean the difference between success or failure.

Having the right team in place is key to relationship building and can mean the difference between success or failure.

In this ever-changing industry, captivating designs, websites, innovative campaigns, and guides are only as effective as the relationships established within the community. What may have worked five years ago might not be as effective today.

Genuine community engagement requires involvement from everyone — from staff to elected officials to the media, arts, culture, and everyone in between. By engaging even critics, DMOs have the opportunity to bring them in as part of the team and make them advocates.



SUMMARY POINTS



Establishing strong ties with local industry leaders and stakeholders is essential for DMOs to be successful.



Personal connections, especially with stakeholders, have a tremendous impact on decisions and outcomes.



Protecting team members from challenging situations, transparent communication, and providing consistent messaging tools are vital for effective engagement.



Select team members who can clearly communicate the organization's message and equip them with the tools they need to be successful.



Utilize a variety of strategies — from destination studies to newsletters to ensure broader reach.



Team visibility, holding regular conversations with trusted community leaders, and knowing when to disengage helps build community connections.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Tourism Works for Okaloosa Campaign - <https://bit.ly/3u8NfuC>
Value of Tourism in Osceola County - <https://bit.ly/3FMB4Gz>
Osceola County Partner Orientation Powerpoint - <https://bit.ly/3StuwnW>



HOW COMMUNITIES DELIVER

Jennifer Adams knows firsthand how important it is to build partnerships within the industry and with other stakeholders. Two years ago, as the taxing district was set to expand countywide, and tensions were at an all time high, it was her close relationships with key stakeholders that enabled her to engage in conversations that helped lobby a proposed solution.

For Misty Johantgen, the community's power was evident when community leaders helped convince the county commission that privatization was the way to go. Not only did these leaders advocate for the formation of their DMO, they also helped secure their contract renewal, proving once again there's power in community.



DELEGATE



PREPARE



INSPIRE



TRAIN



REPRESENT

HOW TO ENGAGE YOUR TEAM

Never put your team in a tough spot. By identifying pain points and prepping them before meetings, potential problem situations can be avoided. Being unfiltered, present, and being very approachable in how one answers questions is important, especially when it comes to building trust, which is key.

Sending team members out to chambers, museums, and community outreach, anything that won't really have the opportunity to do press, and handling all other events personally is a good idea, especially if the county has strict rules on who can speak and where.

As Jennifer Adams put it, "You don't have to do the politics, I will do the politics. I'll do the city council meetings, I'll do the executive committee meetings, and you guys do everything else."

Team preparation is essential. Send out templated presentations, so that everyone has speaking points, especially those who are going to get the facetime.

Experience Kissimmee approaches community engagement with passion — involving their team in community

organizations, industries, professional, and charitable organizations that resonate with them. Each team member is viewed as an ambassador for the organization and the destination. They also rely on informal meetings with elected officials, which has proved a successful strategy for them.

Yet, selecting the right representatives for meetings is critical. It's vital to understand each member's strengths and weaknesses

Each team member is viewed as an ambassador for the organization and the destination.

and never put anyone in an uncomfortable situation. Keep in mind that just because someone does a good job, doesn't mean they're going to do a good job representing the DMO

in the community, on a board, or a forum. And, never put people in a position where potential landmines lie in wait.

Make it clear to your team that saying they don't know, or that they aren't fully up to speed on something is okay. The danger is in those that think they have to know every answer — there's merit in admitting you're not fully up to speed on something.

Offering media training can also prepare team members for public speaking and helps ensure consistent messaging.

EMPOWERING YOUR OUTREACH TEAM

It's important to select people who can get up and deliver the talking points. Having control over the message is key. And, if possible, attend events personally so that you can serve as a resource to answer any questions people may have.

Destin-Fort Walton Beach introduced a Speakers Bureau tool to answer caller questions that range from what a DMO does, to the programs they're involved with,

and the things that are important to them, strategically, which has been effective.

Inviting the entire team to partner orientations, especially newcomers, helps provide a great overview of what's going on.

Media training is again, a great strategy to employ here, and if possible, having dedicated people that talk to the community is the way to go.

STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING INDUSTRY LEADERS TO ENGAGE WITH POLITICAL OFFICIALS

It is important that people embrace the information you're relaying, and not just consume it. Target individuals who are hungry for the information, the ones who can use it to do their jobs better. This

enables two-way engagement and ongoing communication. Knowing the numbers matters but it's about much more, it's also about who you tell, and how they give value to others.





ENGAGING YOUR INDUSTRY & COMMUNITY

Different strategies suit different organizations. To reach a broad audience, using different mediums is key.

Destin-Fort Walton Beach, for example, conducted a destination X study to identify major challenges and to be better equipped to address them. Annual sales trainings, newsletters, and partner orientations are other effective engagement methods.

Annual sales training provides value to partners who want to train their staff. While sending out newsletters serves to engage more people, these communicate actionable items, and the value that the organization can bring. This is also an opportunity to discuss numbers and trends based on the previous month. To be more effective, include opportunities for participation, sales missions or trade shows, share your story, and what successes you've had.

Partner orientations are a great way to identify who really wants to bubble up and get more involved. Invite all partners, so that they can learn about the organization, while they

network. This will make it easier to identify those that are passionate about the industry, those that are eloquent in their ability to speak, and the ones that have the relationships with the people you need to reach.

Think of orientations as auditions, see how your people present, discuss and work with peers.

Think of these orientations as auditions, you get to see how people do in your committees, hear how they present, discuss, and work with their peers before they go out and represent the organization.

Quarterly interactions, whether through meetings or other community events, also boost engagement. Annual marketing planning sessions are a great way to engage with the community and train partners simultaneously. And, while it's important to remember that you don't know all the questions, answers, or challenges, Paul Beirnes points out that it's equally important to communicate your gut feeling, based on markets and percentages. To be able to say, this is what we surmise for X next year, here's why, these are the challenges, and here's our recommendation, and to receive feedback adds real value.

Allowing others to feel like they are part of the conversation, to be heard, and have been part of the planning matters. Quarterly calls are another way to effectively engage with the community. Experience Kissimmee deploys destination updates where they communicate via partner portals to share information and answer questions.

Remember to make your team accessible to the community. Have department heads that are forward facing, and invite your teams to attend events, to remind everyone that it's not just the CEO behind the organization.

Engaging in closed-door, off-the-record conversations with other leaders about what's going on in the community is another

way to engage. Being able to share and dissect information provides great insight. So, grab a few people you trust and have these conversations regularly to uncover information that's not usually available from surveys or other official mediums.

However, knowing when not to engage is also important. Sometimes there are certain groups you don't need to engage with because you won't be able to fix things, no matter what. So, just saying thank you and being done with it is the best course of action.

But above all, the success or failure of any DMO hinges on its ability to authentically engage with their community.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



Strengthen community relationships - Prioritize building relationships with local industry leaders and stakeholders.



Diversify Engagement Mediums - Everyone learns and communicates differently, so use different mediums to reach more people.



Leverage Existing Relationships - Use personal connections to influence key organizational decisions and navigate challenges.



Stay Visible & Accessible - Encourage department heads and team members to attend community events and establish open channels of communication.



Equip Your Team - Provide tools like templated presentations for consistent messaging, hold prep sessions before important meetings to ensure everyone is aligned, and provide speaking points.



Be adaptable - In an ever-changing industry, always be ready to pivot based on current trends and challenges.



Engage Industry Leaders - Identify and collaborate with individuals who are not only receptive to information but can also apply it effectively.

2024 DESTINATION MARKETING SUMMIT



April 3- 5, 2024 | Sheraton Sand Key Resort | Clearwater Beach, Florida

Schedule at a Glance

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024

10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting
2:00 PM – 2:45 PM	Opening Session
2:45 PM - 3:30 PM	Educational Programming
3:45 PM – 5:30 PM	Destination Marketing State of the State Report
5:30 PM – 6:30 PM	Welcome Reception
6:30 PM	Dinner on own

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2024

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Networking Breakfast
9:00 AM – 11:45 AM	Two Tracks of Educational Programing
11:45 AM – 1:00 Noon	Networking Luncheon
1:00 PM – 3:45 PM	Two Tracks of Educational Programing
5:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Connect Evening Event

Connect

FRIDAY, APRIL 5, 2024

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Networking Breakfast
9:00 AM – 12:00 Noon	Legislative Update with Mat Forrest How DMOs and VISIT FLORIDA Can Work Together to Bring More Customers to Our Communities

Hotel Accommodations:

The Sheraton Sand Key Resort is offering a special rate for Destinations Florida meeting participants of \$299 per night. Please call (727) 595-1611 and reference the Destinations Florida group rate.

Reservations must be made by **Monday, March 2, 2024**. Be sure to make your reservation as soon as possible because the room block will sell out.

Sheraton Sand Key Resort
1160 Gulf Blvd
Clearwater Beach, FL 33767
(727) 595-1611



The support from the following partners makes our meetings possible:

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Walton County Tourism Showcases South Walton Experience at NYC Wine & Food Festival

This fall, Walton County Tourism continued its partnership with Food Network New York City Wine & Food Festival. South Walton came to life in New York City for attendees with a front porch-themed experiential area, fresh Gulf seafood dishes from Seagar's Chef Fleetwood Covington, and branded Corkcicle Buzz cups in South Walton bags. Prospective visitors learned about the wonderful activities on the beach and beyond and received a piece of South Walton to take home. VisitSouthWalton.com



The Walton County Tourism team (Ashlyn Temples, Zehnder's Katherine Simon, Kelli Carter, and Zehnder's Katie Campbell) gathers at the New York City Wine & Food Festival, where potential visitors received a piece of South Walton to take home and enjoyed fresh Gulf seafood dishes from Chef Fleetwood Covington.

Martin County Wins GAINer Award for Innovation

Martin County was recently honored during the 2023 GAINer Awards, presented by the Government Marketing University (GMarkU). The team won the top prize in the Innovation category for their unique Explore Natural Martin ecotourism program, developed in partnership with Leave No Trace. The GAINer Awards are recognized as the highest honors for government marketing excellence across the U.S. public sector. DiscoverMartin.com



Winners across seven categories were announced at GMarkU's annual GAIN 2023 Conference on October 17 at the Ritz Carlton in Tysons Corner, Va.

New Website Launches for Visit Indian River County

Visit Indian River County is excited to announce the launch of its brand-new website. This new site is mobile-friendly, making it easier for visitors to explore all the area has to offer. VisitIndianRiverCounty.com now includes a better events listings page where tourism partners can post their own events, upgraded graphics and enhanced listings, and a link to view the annual visitors guide digitally and request one to be mailed. The site will continually be updated and enhanced with new updates to come! VisitIndianRiverCounty.com



VisitIndianRiver.com offers visitors new ways to explore the area.

'Hold a Gator' Booth Promotes Brand Awareness

Florida's Sports Coast, in partnership with the Florida Sports Foundation, unveiled a new approach to enhance brand awareness at the TEAMS Conference in West Palm Beach. The October conference showcased the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee's annual Olympic and Paralympic Sportslink and the National Governing Body Best Practices Seminar. Florida's Sports Coast's and Florida Sports Foundation's brand-enhancing strategy included the introduction of an alligator-themed photo booth. Allowing conference-goers to interact with both brands in a unique and entertaining way left an indelible mark on all those who participated. FLSportsCoast.com



The Florida's Sports Coast/Florida Sports Foundation alligator-themed photo booth not only served to boost brand recognition but also provided a memorable and engaging experience for attendees.



Orlando North, Seminole County - Where Excitement Takes Flight!

On October 28-29, the Orlando Air Show returned to Orlando Sanford International Airport for two days of thrilling aerobatics, military demonstrations, and family fun. The event featured a variety of aircraft, including the F-35 Lightning II, F-18 Rhino, and the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds. In addition to the aerial performances, the air show also offered a variety of ground-based activities, including static aircraft displays, food and beverage vendors, and children's activities. DoOrlandoNorth.com



A pilot ready for takeoff at the Orlando Air show

St. Augustine's Nights of Lights Illumination Celebrates 30 Years

St. Augustine celebrates the 30th annual Nights of Lights with its millions of twinkling white lights illuminating the city's historic architecture, plaza, and bayfront through January. Rooted in the Spanish tradition of placing lit white candles in the windows of homes to mark the Christmas season, Nights of Lights sets a brilliant stage for holiday events and has been recognized by several major publications as one of the best holiday lights displays in the world. FloridasHistoricCoast.com



St. Augustine's Nights of Lights Celebrates 30 years, making the nation's Oldest City shine through January 28, 2024.

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Discover Crystal River Installs Murals Throughout Citrus County

Discover Crystal River Florida is excited to share there are now more than 20 colorful murals throughout Citrus County, including the cities of Crystal River, Homosassa, and Inverness. The engaging public art installations feature a variety of local wildlife; cycling, fishing, and other immersive experiences, and of course, lovable manatees. The latest mural was unveiled recently in Inverness: a larger-than-life depiction of Elvis Presley, inspired by his 1962 movie *Follow That Dream*, which was filmed locally. The Elvis mural was painted by Miami artist Jonathan Ramirez. DiscoverCrystalRiverFL.com



Elvis filmed *Follow That Dream* in Inverness in the early 1960s.

Daytona Turkey Run Car Show Celebrates 50 Years

Daytona Turkey Run celebrated its 50th anniversary over Thanksgiving weekend in the infield at Daytona International Speedway. The four-day event featured thousands of collector cars, from classic American muscle cars to cars from the 1920s as well as a swap meet with 2,000 vendors from all over the country. Considered the largest combined car show, swap meet, and car corral in the U.S., the family-friendly four-day event attracted close to 200,000 attendees to the Daytona Beach area. DaytonaBeach.com



The Daytona Turkey Run, the largest combined car show, swap meet, and car corral in the U.S., celebrated its 50th anniversary over the Thanksgiving weekend at Daytona International Speedway.
Photo: Daytona Beach Area CVB

Visit Jacksonville Partners With Minor League Baseball Team

Visit Jacksonville partnered with the local minor league baseball team, the Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp, to film a promotional video featuring their mascot and local celebrity, Scampi. Filmed at 121 Financial Ballpark, Scampi shared a day in his life and why he loves Jacksonville. View the video on Visit Jacksonville's YouTube channel (youtube.com/udontknowjax). VisitJacksonville.com



A behind-the-scenes look at filming with Scampi, the Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp mascot

Everglades National Park's Flamingo Lodge Now Open

The all-new 24-unit Flamingo Lodge at Everglades National Park's Flamingo area in Monroe County, closed for 18 years, now offers contemporary boutique-style units overlooking Florida Bay. The Flamingo Restaurant, opening in December, serves breakfast, lunch, dinner, and bar libations. "Flamingo is now a world-class destination," said Pedro Ramos, superintendent of Everglades and Dry Tortugas national parks. Nearby, the new Guy Bradley Visitor Center with sweeping bay views is open daily, showcasing exhibits and a bookstore-souvenir shop. Fla-Keys.com



Each unit of the Flamingo Lodge has a balcony overlooking Florida Bay.



Brazilian Influencer Visits Florida's Adventure Coast

Brazilian social media influencer Gabriela Temer from Juju na Brazil recently embarked on an exciting adventure to Florida's Adventure Coast, and her followers couldn't get enough of the stunning escapades. From kayaking in crystal-clear springs, visiting the mermaids of Weeki Wachee Springs, staying at the unique lodging of The Captain's House, to exploring the enchanting wildlife, Gabriela's vibrant content showcased the beauty of Florida's Adventure Coast, Brooksville-Weeki Wachee. The total media value is estimated at \$1.2 million. FloridasAdventureCoast.com



Manatees observe kayakers in the crystal-clear springs of Florida's Adventure Coast.

The Palm Beaches Supports Future Tourism Workers

Discover The Palm Beaches recently hosted its first-ever Hospitality & Tourism Career Day in partnership with CareerSource Palm Beach County and Palm Beach County Schools where more than 50 high school students had the opportunity to learn about the vibrant careers available in the tourism industry. The organizations also partnered up for a Hospitality & Tourism Job Fair bringing job seekers together with more than 35 hotels, restaurants, and attractions in the community. ThePalmBeaches.com



Discover The Palm Beaches team members engage with high school students at the inaugural Career Day.

Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Attends World Travel Market Conference in London

Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach (PG/EB) Visitor Bureau's senior leisure sales manager, Aimee Blenker, attended the World Travel Market in London as a partner of VISIT FLORIDA alongside Cellet Marketing & PR and Sunseeker Resort. World Travel Market brings together international travel and media professionals offering three days of one-on-one appointments with destinations from around the world. PG/EB started marketing internationally this fall, and this was a great opportunity for educating both tour operators and media professionals on the PG/EB destination and all it has to offer. PureFlorida.com



Aimee Blenker, PG/EB senior leisure sales manager, and Rachel Bridger-Tomlinson with Sunseeker Resort

Amelia Island Offers Accessibility and Inclusivity for Travelers With Disabilities

To highlight the destination's accessibility and inclusivity initiatives for travelers with disabilities, Amelia Island CVB recently hosted Jamie Santillo, founder and CEO of Adventures by Jamie, a top-rated special needs certified travel agency. "As a power wheelchair user, I can say with absolute certainty Amelia Island has done a wonderful job making things as inclusive as possible for everyone to enjoy the quaint seaside town. We can't wait to visit again," said Santillo. AmeliaIsland.com



Jamie Santillo (center) of Adventures by Jamie enjoys a beach outing on Amelia Island.



iARTE VIVA Wins Seven Awards at 2023 IFEA Convention

The International Festivals & Events Association's annual awards recognize outstanding accomplishments and top-quality campaigns produced to promote festivals and events around the world. This year's event drew entries from around the globe with awards handed out in 70 categories. iARTE VIVA!, A Celebration of Hispanic Arts and Culture presented by the Naples, Marco Island, Everglades CVB, drew over 293,000 attendees in its inaugural year and was recognized with seven awards. *ParadiseCoast.com*



John Melleky, Naples, Marco Island, Everglades CVB, accepts the Pinnacle Award from IFEA Foundation Chair Cassie Dispenza at the 66th annual IFEA Convention.



Lee VCB's Junonia Award Goes to Captiva Cruises for Its Positive Impact on Tourism

The Lee County VCB presented its annual Junonia Award to the owners of Captiva Cruises at its Tourism Outlook Annual Meeting. "Captiva Cruises' vessel, The Lady Chadwick, made her first trip to Cabbage Key last month, marking the first time since Hurricane Ian that their full fleet of vessels is once again operational," said Tamara Pigott, Lee County VCB executive director. "Captiva Cruises continues to attract visitors, giving them the opportunity to experience the beauty and learn about the history of Southwest Florida." *VisitFortMyers.com*



Tamara Pigott, executive director of the Lee County VCB, celebrates with 2023 Junonia Award recipients, the owners of Captiva Cruises, Capt. Bob Rando, Jenny Rando, Leslie Junghans, and Capt. Brad Junghans.

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Destin-Fort Walton Beach Welcomes 12 Loggerheads and 464 Hatchlings During Sea Turtle Nesting Season

Destin-Fort Walton Beach's sea turtle nesting season concluded after welcoming 12 loggerheads and 464 hatchlings. This year, the tourism department's Coastal Resources team partnered with The Gulfarium C.A.R.E. Center to raise awareness and educate during "CAREing for Turtles" sessions. During this after-hours experience, visitors had a chance to go behind the scenes for a look into the operations of the rehabilitation center, meet current patients, and learn how to perform a mock in-take of an injured turtle. *DestinFWB.com*



This past year The Gulfarium C.A.R.E. Center cared for 124 turtles, including 13 greens, 80 loggerheads, and 31 Kemp's ridleys, as well as an additional 31 hatchlings. Photo courtesy of The Gulfarium

Space Coast Visitor Information Specialist Receives ROSE Award

The Space Coast Office of Tourism's own visitor information specialist, Elsie Radle, received a ROSE Award from the Space Coast Chapter of the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association. Visitors looking for a friendly face to guide them to an unforgettable day on the Space Coast can head over to the Visitor Information Center in Cocoa Beach. Radle will be there to assist in curating the perfect day in paradise. *VisitSpaceCoast.com*



Elsie Radle poses with her ROSE Award.

Palm Coast and Flagler Beaches Collaborates on a Future Eco-Discovery Center

In November, Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches hosted staff from the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) and the National Park Service (NPS) for a collaborative meeting regarding a future Eco-Discovery Center and the enhancement of Flagler County parks and trails. Attendees visited the site of the future center and enjoyed a bicycle tour. The groups will explore ways to work together to expand the Flagler County trail system, update signage and brochures, and identify potential funding sources. *VisitFlagler.com*



Staffers from the NEFRC, NPS, and Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches tour the site of the future Eco-Discovery Center in Flagler County.

Visit Lauderdale to Make Rose Parade Debut

Visit Lauderdale will make its Rose Parade debut on January 1, 2024, showcasing a 55-foot float themed "Everyone Under the Sun." The tropical paradise inspired float will feature up to 45,000 flowers, including 1,000 varieties of colorful roses, paired with organic floral recreations of the destination's natural treasures and attractions. The float will also feature landmarks such as the iconic wave wall along Fort Lauderdale beach and an architectural replica of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, or as locals call it, The Guitar Hotel, which perfectly aligns with this year's parade theme, "Celebrating a World of Music: The Universal Language." *VisitLauderdale.com*



Visit Lauderdale's Rose Parade float will feature a tropical paradise and the destination's landmarks.



Bradenton Area CVB Engages With Journalists, Content Creators in Canada

In October, VISIT FLORIDA hosted their Canada Media Mission & Reception in Vancouver and Toronto where a representative of the Bradenton Area CVB was able to foster new relationships with journalists in both markets. They engaged journalists and content creators in both markets in conversation surrounding the new convention center expansion, upcoming sustainability initiatives, and memorable beach vacations. BACVB looks forward to upcoming hosted visits from this well-planned media mission. BradentonGulfIslands.com



Writer conversations at the Vancouver media reception

Visit Pensacola Unveils Public Art Display With Holiday Cube Installation to Showcase The Way to Beach™

To showcase The Way to Beach™, Visit Pensacola unveiled an eight-foot mural Holiday Cube in Museum Plaza. Now in its sixth year, the Holiday Cube is at a new location in front of the Pensacola History Museum, encouraging visitors to capture holiday photos. "These cubes are a great way for us to contribute to the vibrancy of the community and to engage with locals and visitors by sharing a piece of Pensacola in their everyday lives," President & CEO Darien Schaefer said. VisitPensacola.com



The Way to Beach Cube in Museum Plaza; each side features an eight-foot mural with scenes and iconic figures from the destination.

We're All Brought to You by Tourism

The Greater Miami CVB set the stage for an action-packed year ahead during its annual meeting on October 26. More than 750 attendees celebrated the visitor industry's \$20.2 billion impact on the local economy and the launch of "Brought to You by Tourism." The new initiative aims to directly engage locals, highlighting the benefits the visitor industry brings, from bolstering public transportation and funding health care to advancing education, significantly improving the everyday lives of residents. MiamiAndBeaches.com



Tourism's financial impact funds transportation and other public benefits in the Greater Miami area.

Discover Lake County Florida Sponsors World Waterski Championships

On October 7-15, Lake County, Florida hosted the IWWF World Waterski Championships at the Jack Taver's Water Ski School in Groveland. Two hundred athletes representing 34 countries competed in waterskiing events with thousands of spectators attending, translating to an estimated over \$2.6 million of economic impact to the area. Discover Lake County was a sponsor of the event, further cementing their reputation as a premier sports events destination. VisitLakeFL.com



IWWF World Waterski Championships in Groveland, Florida



Visit Orlando Launches Its First-Ever 3D Billboard

Visit Orlando's first 3D video billboard launched in the heart of New York City at one of the city's busiest intersections near Penn Station as part of its fall campaign. The seven-story billboard showcases vibrant imagery of Orlando's unique experiences inspiring travelers to come to Orlando. The broader fall campaign spans 13 key markets, spotlighting Orlando's fall and holiday events, ensuring Orlando stays a top choice for travelers considering their next destination. VisitOrlando.com



Visit Orlando's groundbreaking 3D billboard in NYC showcases vivid imagery of unique experiences that make Orlando "Unbelievably Real."

Alachua County Reports Record-Breaking TDT Revenue for FY23

Alachua County's Tourist Development Tax revenue surpassed \$8 million for the first time during the 2023 fiscal year, climbing half a million dollars from the prior year's collections and indicating strong local tourism. In total, overnight visitors spent \$164 million in paid lodgings during the past fiscal year. Throughout 2022, collections were reinvested into the community in support of local organizations, events, and capital projects. Among the reinvestments, the county used \$2.18 million to fund around 30 organizations whose programming attracts visitors and enhances the destination year-round. VisitGainesville.com



Dance Alive National Ballet (DANB) is the premier touring company in the Southeastern United States with over 50 years of programming in Alachua County and beyond. DANB is one of 30 organizations supported with TDT dollars via Destination Enhancement Grants administered by Visit Gainesville, Alachua County. Photo courtesy of Dance Alive National Ballet, Colleen Rand

Visit Sebring Hosts Golf Media & Citrus Golf Trail Open

Visit Sebring recently hosted the International Network of Golf's (ING) Fall Conference. ING comprises golf media from the U.S and Canada. They spent time in educational sessions, played on the local Citrus Golf Trail (CitrusGolfTrail.com) golf courses, and participated in a PRO-AM tournament with Minor League Golf Tour players who were in town for the Citrus Golf Trail Open. These minor league players competed for a chance at \$25,000 and the prestigious "orange jacket." VisitSebring.com



ING golfers on the Citrus Golf Trail's Country Club of Sebring

Experience Kissimmee's 2023: A Year of Destination Innovation and Sustainability

As the year concludes, Experience Kissimmee proudly reflects on a year of trailblazing achievements. Securing NFL London Series Games and Jacksonville Jaguars partnerships, along with becoming Rangers Football Club's official travel destination, marked significant successes. "Big, Bold Heart of Florida" and the triumphs of *Vámonos a Kissimmee* and The Kissimmee Experience epitomized their innovative destination marketing. Additionally, their pioneering Trees4Travel initiative, which plants trees for actualized meeting room nights, is helping to redefine sustainability in the industry. ExperienceKissimmee.com



Experience Kissimmee's new campaign highlights the destination as the Big, Bold Heart of Florida.



Visit St. Pete/Clearwater Highlights Benefits of Tourism Amidst Shoreline Restoration Projects

The St. Pete/Clearwater destination is in the midst of emergency shoreline restoration projects along sections of the Pinellas County beaches. The Pinellas County Public Works department is leading the project to mitigate critical erosion caused by Hurricane Idalia. The project consists of constructing dunes, moving strategically along the coast to remedy the affected areas while also reducing impact on visitors and beachgoers. In addition to providing critical protection for the beautiful beaches and accommodations along the shore, the project has provided an opportunity for Visit St. Pete/Clearwater to highlight their "From Visitors With Love" campaign. VisitStPeteClearwater.com



Specially designed signs have been placed at shoreline restoration project locations to help educate residents about the importance tourism plays in St. Pete/Clearwater's local economy.

Visit Tampa Bay Celebrates Best Year Ever At Masquerade-Themed Annual Meeting

Visit Tampa Bay, along with 500 community stakeholders and industry partners, celebrated their most successful year yet with a masquerade-themed annual meeting on October 31. The room erupted in applause as Tampa Bay revealed its historic achievement of reaching more than \$1.1 billion in taxable hotel revenue, welcoming 26.7 million visitors, and infusing \$8.5 billion into the local economy. This significant surge in visitor spending played a significant role in contributing to more than \$514 million in local and state tax revenue and supporting more than 57,000 jobs in the hospitality industry. VisitTampaBay.com



Visit Tampa Bay celebrates a record-breaking year during its masquerade-themed annual meeting.

Visit St. Lucie Interactive Passport Programs Answer Age-Old Question

Visit St. Lucie provides the answer to the age-old question "What's there to do around here?" with a comprehensive array of digital and physical passes including the Nature & Wildlife digital pass, the Treasure Coast Wine & Ale Trail, and the Treasure Coast Kids Quest. These passes have been thoughtfully curated by Visit St. Lucie and designed to cater to the diverse tastes of every visitor. To add an extra layer of excitement, visitors can find a veritable treasure trove of even more activities listed on Visit St. Lucie's "Things To Do" page. VisitStLucie.com/things-to-do.



During the holiday season, Visit St. Lucie is adding to its interactive passport programs with the brand new Getting-in-the-Holiday-Spirit Pass!



Want to See Your DMO's News Here?

As you can see after reading the last several pages, we regularly publish brief news items from DMOs in *Tourism Marketing Today*.

We call them "Quick Trips," and they are your opportunity to share your good news! Your story should be about *past* events, awards, or promotions to serve as "best practices" for your fellow tourism professionals. Our deadlines typically fall on a Thursday around the middle of each month. If you aren't receiving an email reminder, reach out to Susan Trainor (editor.trainor@gmail.com), and she will add you to the mailing list.

Don't miss your opportunity to submit a Quick Trip from your DMO!



St. Augustine Tourism Leader Receives Presidential Volunteer Service Award

In October, Regina Gayle Phillips, executive director of the Lincolnville Museum and Cultural Center in St. Augustine, was presented with the Presidential Volunteer Service Award from the office of President Joseph R. Biden. The local tourism community, family, and friends were part of the reception that celebrated Gayle's service. Ms. Phillips is vice chair of the St. Johns County TDC and has been appointed to the Florida Museum of Black History Task Force. FloridasHistoricCoast.com



In recognition of her commitment to service and preservation of St. Augustine's Black History, Regina Gayle Phillips, executive director of the Lincolnville Museum, was recently presented the Presidential Volunteer Service Award.

Greater Miami CVB Makes Key Staff Appointments

The Greater Miami CVB has named Karla Grant director of human resources and Geraldo Guillen director of finance. With more than a decade of management experience in hospitality, real estate, and tech, Grant is a seasoned HR generalist with an emphasis on developing high-performing teams and creating positive and inclusive workplaces, reflecting the GMCVB's core values. Guillen's more than 15 years in financial management implementing major ERP and CRM systems brings a new dimension to the organization's financial operations. MiamiandMiamiBeach.com



Karla Grant



Geraldo Guillen

Visit Central Florida Names Social Media and Creative Coordinator

Visit Central Florida has named Christina DiGregory its new social media and creative coordinator. Before joining the VCF team, she was the graphic designer and social media associate with the Central Florida Development Council. DiGregory graduated with highest honors from Florida Southern College in 2022 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. She was also a graphic designer and a seasonal marketing and social media assistant with the Lakeland Flying Tigers baseball team. VisitCentralFlorida.org



Christina DiGregory

St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches VCB Hires Social Media Coordinator

The St. Johns County VCB, also known as St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches, is excited to share with the community the hiring of their newest staff member, Kaycee Sapp. She earned a bachelor's degree in sociology and gender studies from the University of North Florida, as well as an associate's degree in graphic design. As the social media coordinator, Sapp will help manage the organization's multi-channel social media, creating engaging content that showcases Florida's Historic Coast and all the area has to offer. FloridasHistoricCoast.com



Kaycee Sapp

Space Coast Office of Tourism Welcomes New Marketing Director

The Space Coast Office of Tourism is delighted to announce the addition of Laura Beebe as their new marketing director. Beebe joins Florida's Space Coast from Alabama Gulf Coast CVB (dba as Gulf Shores and Orange Beach Tourism), where she has been for 10 years as their marketing director. Her prior experience includes marketing roles at resort properties and vacation rental management firms including Spectrum Resorts and Meyer Vacation Rentals. VisitSpaceCoast.com



Laura Beebe

Visit Tampa Bay Welcomes Vice President of Global Communications

Visit Tampa Bay welcomes Mary Haban as its new vice president of global communications. An award-winning communicator with decades of experience in public relations, executive communications, and tourism, Haban is known for her natural ability to build brands, elevate organizations, and deliver exceptional results. She recently served as the senior manager of public relations and communications for Visit Lauderdale. In her new role, she will lead and direct Visit Tampa Bay's worldwide public relations, media relations, and global communications. She is an accredited public relations professional, the recipient of both Emmy and Addy awards, and in 2020 received the Life Achievement award from the Tampa Bay Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. VisitTampaBay.com



Mary Haban

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Legal Resource for Your DMO

As a member benefit for you, Destinations Florida has retained Steven M. Hogan with the Ausley McMullen law firm to provide insight into the operation of the TDT and related issues to Destinations Florida.

There are several situations where it would be helpful for you to have a legal opinion for your community. As a member benefit, you can speak with Mr. Hogan about the facts and laws at a general level.

To take advantage of this program, feel free to reach out to Steve Hogan at the information below:



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INSIDE: Special insert – Crafting a DMO Team for Industry Engagement

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Destinations Florida serves as the single unifying voice for all of Florida's DMOs, providing continuing insight and direction as we face an increasingly competitive tourism marketplace. Organized in 1996, Destinations Florida strives to increase the overall effectiveness of Florida DMOs' destination marketing efforts through industry education, legislative outreach, enhancing professionalism and facilitating communication.

Destinations Florida represents the 57 official county DMOs that promote their communities throughout the world. Tourism promotion activities help to attract 137.6 million visitors to Florida, adding \$101.9 billion to Florida's economy and supporting more than 1.7 million jobs. These activities are made possible by Tourist Development Taxes provided by Florida Statutes Section 125.0104. Statistics: VISIT FLORIDA Research