

TourismMarketing Today

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Tallahassee to Host Seven Major Cross-Country Events This Fall

2021 to Be the Biggest Race Season Ever

The biggest cross-country season to date has officially started in Tallahassee with seven major competitive races to be held at the award-winning Apalachee Regional Park. These races include the FSU Open, the FSU Invite, the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSA) State Championships, the National Junior College Athletic Association Region 8 Championships, the prestigious USA Track & Field Club Championships, and for the first time in the race's 83-year history, Tallahassee will welcome the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I National Championships to Florida. All told, these races are



The award-winning Apalachee Regional Park offers an excellent race venue designed by runners, for runners.

anticipated to bring 35,000 visitors and \$10 million in direct spending to Tallahassee.

"In addition to hosting our biggest race season, we recently unveiled major improvements at Apalachee Regional Park including a newly constructed operations building

CROSS-COUNTRY... continues on pg. 3

Three Great Lessons

by Robert Skrob



We just wrapped up the best ever Destinations Florida annual meeting. And since the Destinations

Florida annual meeting is the best meeting for DMO executives in the world, this was the best ever meeting of DMO executives. One highlight was the panel discussion with Virginia Haley of Visit Sarasota, William D. Talbert III, CDME, of Greater Miami CVB, and Jack Wert of Naples, Marco Island and the Everglades CVB. There were many great lessons; here are three big ones.

*THREE GREAT LESSONS
... continues on pg. 3*

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with rest rooms, multiuse stage, sidewalks, landscaping, and a permanent finish line structure," says Kerri L. Post, executive director of Visit Tallahassee. "Tallahassee was already known as a thriving cross-country sports tourism destination, and the recent enhancements to the park now make it one of the nation's premier cross-country courses."



Seven major competitive races this year are expected to bring 35,000 visitors and \$10 million in direct spending to Tallahassee.

Since 2009, the park has hosted more than 100 meets, nine national championships, more than 80,000 runners, and hundreds of thousands of spectators, all of whom experienced a level of hospitality that sets the standard for cross-country events across the nation.

cross-country course recently celebrated the completion of major improvements, solidifying Tallahassee's reputation as the ultimate cross-country sports tourism destination in the nation. Last month, Visit Tallahassee submitted a bid to host the 2026 World Athletics Cross Country Championships, as one of four U.S. cities competing for the event.

Designed by runners, for runners, the award-winning

DESTINATIONS FLORIDA

TourismMarketing
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On the Cover
Wesley Chapel recently hosted the 2021 annual meeting of Destinations Florida. Pictured on the cover is The Shops at Wiregrass in Wesley Chapel, Tampa Bay's premiere open-air retail and entertainment destination. This pedestrian-friendly outdoor lifestyle village is a gathering place for locals and visitors alike. Read more about the Destinations Florida annual meeting in Robert Skrob's message on page one.

THREE GREAT LESSONS ... continued from pg. 1

Don't fight a lost cause.

When you see that the community is aligned with one course of action, Virginia Haley warns that it's important not to take on that battle. "Don't go down in flames," she advised. Instead, bide your time so you have the respect and relationships you need to rally the community and lawmakers around your vision in the future."

Show up.

Bill Talbert advised that you "show up." Don't worry about what you may or may not contribute. Participate. Be at the meeting. If you didn't get appointed to the committee, be in the audience. When you are there, you will be seen by others as an important player, you'll be asked your opinion, and you'll be given opportunities to contribute.

Focus on customers.

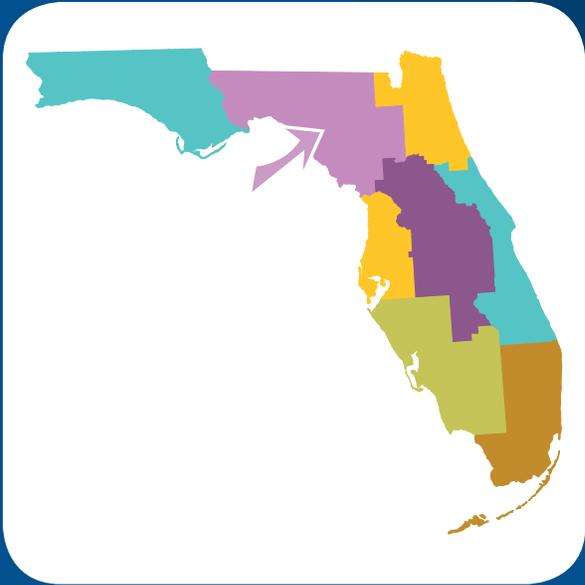
When things are toughest. When the bureaucracy demands another pointless hour of your time. When lawmakers reject



Robert Skrob moderates a panel discussion at the Destinations Florida annual meeting with Jack Wert, Bill Talbert, and Virginia Haley, who shared important lessons learned over their distinguished careers in tourism promotion.

your idea. At times like these, Jack Wert has found inspiration and comfort by turning his attention to the visitors. Talk to customers, interact with visitors, and see your destination through their eyes. It's a great reminder that you really do live in and promote paradise.

Thank you to everyone who made the Destinations Florida annual meeting a success. I look forward to seeing you next time.



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

Columbia County Moves Forward With Brand Development, New Regional Park

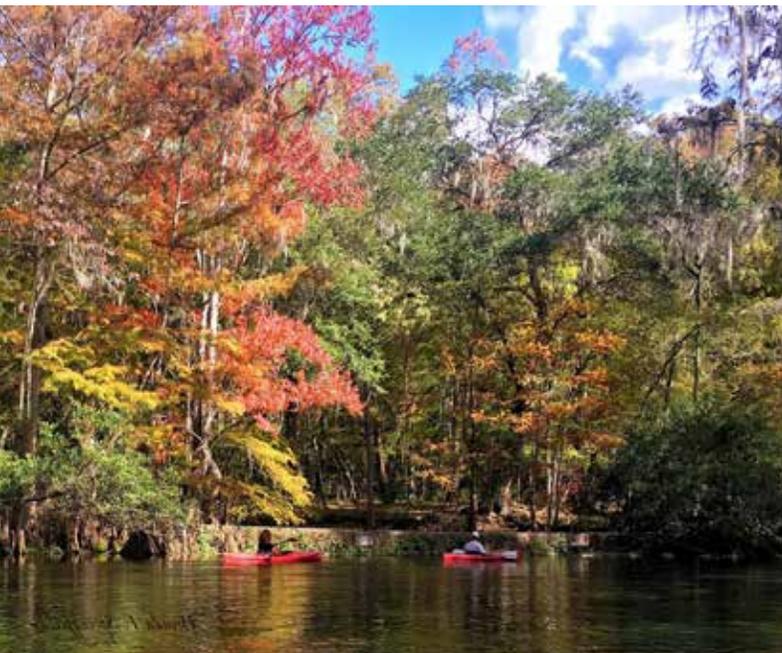
Fall is in the air in Columbia County! The TDC office is looking forward to cooler temperatures and new adventures.

Paradise Advertising is working diligently on the TDC's new brand development. They are currently wrapping up the Naming Convention Testing - Research Survey. The research survey was distributed to past visitors and expected visitors that live in Columbia County's top seven target markets. Other initiatives by Paradise include the TDC's 2022 marketing plan, website transition, social media management, and public relations.

The public relations team had remarkable success this summer, as Columbia County was featured on Lonely Planet, Travel + Leisure, Omaha.com, and Parade Magazine online.

In September, Columbia County welcomed TBG Partners to Lake City to begin the master planning process and to perform a deep-dive into the 500-acre property the TDC purchased last year. The team of ecologists, park planners, landscape architects, and engineers completed several days of reconnaissance and conducted the project kick-off meeting with county staff.

"Columbia County is thrilled to finally move forward on this regional park project that was put on a brief hold due to the pandemic. We look forward to seeing the final product in the spring," says Paula Vann, executive director of Columbia County TDC.



Canoers enjoy the fall color while paddling the Ichetucknee River.



A large live oak reaches skyward at the proposed regional park property in Columbia County.



Annual Peanut Festival Promotes Visitation to Levy County

Begun over 30 years ago to celebrate the peanut industry and harvest, the Central Florida Peanut Festival is now the Williston Area Chamber of Commerce's biggest event—drawing in upward of 8,000 people each year.

Held the first Saturday of October in Williston's Heritage Park, the one-day festival brings more than 100 vendors from across the South to Levy County, the Crossroads of Florida.

"The Peanut Festival is a fall tradition for Williston and Levy County. The festival helps to educate the public on the role farmers play in the community," says Tisha Whitehurst, executive director of the Levy County Visitors Bureau. "The variety of booths available generate funds for vendors from Levy County and beyond."



Mayor Jerry Robinson of Williston, who serves on the Levy County TDC, enjoys the humor of one of the many peanut-themed signs at the Central Florida Peanut Festival.

From food to crafts, jewelry, apparel, and everything in between, the day is the perfect kickoff to the holiday shopping season. Entertainment is held throughout the day in the Kenneth A. Schwiebert Pavilion, and peanut royalty is crowned in two age groups—infants and children.

"Our local restaurants and stores see a large increase in traffic on the weekend of the festival. The festival also reminds those visitors to come back on other weekends when it is not so busy," Whitehurst says. "This event creates an increase in our local economy for several weeks beyond the first weekend in October."



The Florida Peanut Federation educates consumers about peanuts with this colorful graphic on the side of a trailer parked at the Central Florida Peanut Festival.

Visit Gainesville, Alachua County Promotes Visitation With Cooperative Billboard Advertising Campaign

With multiple exits along I-75, Alachua County is ideally positioned to capitalize on transient stays and to influence visitation by creating awareness of the county's nature-based, cultural, and visitor resources. To leverage these assets and in support of tourism industry partners' pandemic recovery plans, Visit Gainesville, Alachua County invested in seven new billboards and launched a Cooperative Billboard Advertising Program.

The Alachua County Board of County Commissioners approved an allocation of TDT for the newly launched billboard co-op grant program to support independently produced advertising campaigns generated by tourism industry participants. Since its inception in January 2021, the program has resulted in 12 new

billboards, amplifying the county's presence as a leader in the regional trade area. Participating businesses include Spurrier's Gridiron Grille, Gainesville Regional Airport, Florida Museum of Natural History, GNV Museums, 4 Rivers Smokehouse, and the City of High Springs.

Visit Gainesville, Alachua County's year-round billboard campaign generates an estimated 1,084,580 weekly impressions. The visuals and messaging focus on inspiring future visits and encouraging travelers to stop in Alachua County for dining, attractions, and lodging. A percentage of travelers driving by the billboards are retargeted with digital ads leading them to information and resources on VisitGainesville.com.



With seven destination branded billboards and 12 billboards from participants in a co-op advertising initiative, Alachua County establishes an assertive presence along the I-75 corridor to inform travelers and attract visitation.



GNV Museums, an alliance comprising Cotton Club, Matheson, Harn, Florida Natural History, and Cade museums, as well as the University of Florida Galleries and the City of Gainesville Cultural Affairs, along with Spurrier's Gridiron Grille, are participants in the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County billboard cooperative advertising program.



Tallahassee Celebrates Steady Increases in Visitation

"Tallahassee has a lot to celebrate as we sprint into fall and continue to see steady increases in visitation, ADR, occupancy, and TDT collections," says Visit Tallahassee Executive Director Kerri L. Post.

Proving that college football isn't the only game in town, Visit Tallahassee is set to host the busiest season of cross-country races at Leon County's award-winning Apalachee Regional Park. Seven prestigious races will be held this fall including the NCAA Division I Cross Country National Championships in November.



Tallahassee's newest Visitor Information Center & Gift Shop is located in the heart of downtown Tallahassee at Cascades Park.

Expanding the ability to serve visitors in-market, a new downtown Visitor Information Center & Gift Shop opened at Cascades Park in the heart of downtown Tallahassee.

As 25% of visitors to Tallahassee are visiting friends and family, Visit Tallahassee launched a local campaign to encourage residents to explore new restaurants, attractions, parks, and trails called the Summer Backyard Bucket List. The program featured more than 70 industry partners, driving spending to businesses and generating hundreds of thousands of social media impressions.



Visit Tallahassee's Summer Backyard Bucket List encourages residents and their visiting family and friends to explore all there is to do in Tallahassee.

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County Commissioners on the TDC?

by Steven M. Hogan

We recently received a question from a Destinations Florida member about an odd position taken by a county attorney. The county attorney apparently thought that county commissioners could not be voting members of the county's Tourist Development Council (TDC) because the commissioner would be "voting twice" on TDC matters—once at the TDC, and once again as a member of the County Commission.

This position, we explained, is contradicted by the terms of the TDC statute. The composition of the TDC is controlled by section



According to section 125.0104(4)(e), Florida Statutes, members of the TDC will be members of the county's governing board that receives the TDC's recommendations.

125.0104(4)(e), Florida Statutes. This section specifically states that the chair of the TDC must be a member of the county's governing board, which we have always read to mean the Board of County Commissioners. The statute also states that other members of the TDC are required to be elected officials.



Steven M. Hogan

The function of the TDC under subsection (4)(e) is to make recommendations to the county's governing board. The statute therefore has a "baked in" process where members of the TDC will be members of the county's governing board that receives the TDC's recommendations.

After we provided this information to the Destinations Florida member, the county attorney reconsidered the prior position and no longer held that a county commissioner was barred from being a voting member of the TDC.

Please keep this in mind if similar situations arise for you.

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.

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Panama City Beach Hosts Annual Pirates of the High Seas Fest

Visit Panama City Beach invited kids of all ages to find their sea legs and join in the celebrations of the annual Pirates of the High Seas Fest, October 4-10. Pirate-fans participated in several online and in-person activities, including storytelling videos, downloadable themed crafts, a digital pirate costume contest, and even an in-person treasure hunt in Panama City Beach. The award-winning festival celebrates the legacy of the pirates who once roamed the Gulf of Mexico and pillaged the Emerald Coast. VisitPanamaCityBeach.com



Pirates of the High Seas Fest tells the tale of Dominique Youx and his krew of loyal buccaneers through staged pirate battles.

Saving Alligator Reef Lighthouse

In the Florida Keys & Key West, 461 swimmers participated in the recent Swim for Alligator Lighthouse, the open-water, eight-mile roundtrip competition to raise awareness of Keys lighthouse preservation. Islamorada's Nonprofit Friends of the Pool Inc., granted ownership under the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act, plans to raise up to \$9 million to restore and preserve the nearly 150-year-old Alligator Reef Lighthouse (SaveAlligatorLighthouse.org). Six offshore Keys lighthouses are the world's largest collection of iron piling lighthouses. Fla-Keys.com



Competitors in the Swim for Alligator Lighthouse event round the Florida Keys lighthouse and head to shore on Sept. 11 near Islamorada. Photo: Steve Panariello, Florida Keys News Bureau

Martin County Tourism Receives Shining Example Award

The Martin County Office of Tourism & Marketing was recently honored with a coveted Shining Example Award in the Best Marketing category for its Missed Milestones campaign. The award was one of 16 presented at the Southeast Tourism Society's annual Connections conference, held recently in Spartanburg, South Carolina. "We were absolutely elated to accept the prestigious Shining Example Award for our ongoing marketing efforts," says Nerissa Okiye, tourism director of Martin County. DiscoverMartin.com



Ian Centrone, tourism public relations and community liaison for Martin County, makes an acceptance speech during the annual STS Connections conference.

Visit Sebring's Winners Circle Tourism Award Recipients Announced

Visit Sebring recently announced winners in eight tourism categories during the Winner's Circle Awards program. The program recognized individuals, teams, businesses, and organizations that exceeded expectations and served as tourism ambassadors by going above and beyond their typical, everyday duties during the 2020 calendar year. Award categories include Restaurant Service, Hotel Service, Attractions Service, Volunteer, Rising Star, Innovation, Sports, and Humanitarian. "Our tourism partners overcame many challenges last year, and we are thrilled to celebrate their dedication to outstanding customer service," says Visit Sebring's Casey Hartt. VisitSebring.com



Six of the eight Winner's Circle Tourism Award winners



Naples, Marco Island and the Everglades CVB Awarded Top Honor for Tourism Advocacy

Florida's Paradise Coast was the proud recipient of three awards at this year's Florida Governor's Conference on Tourism: the coveted Henry for its Local Tourism Impact campaign; the Bronze award for its Only Paradise Will Do eco-tourism campaign; and the Bronze for its Cooking Up a Culinary campaign. The campaigns supported the local community during the pandemic, requiring a nimble, reactive, and adaptive approach to messaging and creative. In Collier County, tourism accounts for approximately 10% of the workforce. *ParadiseCoast.com*



Naples Marco Island and the Everglades CVB team celebrate their Flagler Awards. Pictured are Danny Gaekwad, chair of VISIT FLORIDA; Sandra Rios, CVB public relations & communications manager; Jack Wert, recently retired CVB executive director; Buzzy Ford, CVB digital marketing specialist; Paul Beirnes, CVB executive director; and Dana Young, president & CEO of VISIT FLORIDA. Also on stage are Lisa Chamberlain, CVB group sales manager, and Claudia Cianfero, CVB travel industry & leisure sales manager.

Daytona Beach Area CVB Hosts Tourism Partner Day

The Daytona Beach Area CVB hosted its annual Tourism Partner Day in September. Following Executive Director Lori Campbell Baker's industry overview, the virtual event featured a variety of topics including an overview of the CVB's 2021-22 marketing plan, rollout of new co-op advertising opportunities, attracting and booking group business, and a keynote presentation by Paul McLeod with Simpleview on "Decoding Google Analytics." The session, which was well attended, was also recorded and distributed to all partners following the event. *DaytonaBeach.com*



The Daytona Beach Area CVB hosted its annual Tourism Partner Day in September.

Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach VCB Hosts Media Event at Tampa Bay Rays Game

The Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach VCB invited journalists, meeting planners, and influencers to mingle with hospitality representatives while watching the Tampa Bay Rays take on the Toronto Blue Jays at Tropicana Field. Invitees were able to enjoy the game while learning more about the destination's breathtaking area beaches, outdoor activities, and why "Our Best Side Is Outside." *PureFlorida.com*



Journalists, meeting planners, and influencers learn more about Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach while enjoying a Tampa Bay Rays game.

YouTube Series Highlights Seminole County's Wilderness Areas

Encounters with Jim Duby is Orlando North's first YouTube series aimed at highlighting the beautiful wilderness areas of Seminole County for visitors. The series follows Seminole County Natural Lands Director Jim Duby and Orlando North Tourism's Jessica Pickering as they explore four different wilderness areas to learn about the native wildlife and conservation efforts with a recap episode to tie it all together. All five episodes are available to stream on Orlando North's YouTube Channel. *DoOrlandoNorth.com*



Screen grab from episode 1 of *Encounters with Jim Duby* in the Black Hammock Wilderness Area. Pictured are Jessica Pickering, Orlando North, Seminole County Tourism, and Jim Duby, director of the Natural Lands Program.



Orlando Is Filled With PRIDE

Orlando has been ranked the most LGBTQ-friendly travel destination in the United States, according to *parksleepfly.com*. Visit Orlando has worked closely with the LGBTQ+ community recently to spotlight events like Come Out With Pride, the Annual Pulse Remembrance Ceremony, and the bid to host WorldPride 2026, an international celebration of the LGBTQ+ community. Its new strategic plan also includes an updated vision statement: "To be the most visited, welcoming and inclusive travel destination in the world." *VisitOrlando.com*



The Come Out With Pride parade

Beach Baskets | Indian River County

In efforts to keep local beaches clean, Indian River County, Coastal Connections, and Waste Management implemented Beach Baskets, a joint initiative to encourage beachgoers to conduct their own cleanups. Beach Baskets are conveniently placed at the beach entrances, allowing visitors to easily grab a basket, collect and toss trash, then return the basket on their way out. The success at each location in its first year encouraged the county to install five new stations and made Beach Baskets a permanent resource at the county's local beaches. *IndianRiverCounty.com*



Signs at Indian River County beaches invite visitors to borrow a basket and use it to collect trash.
Photo: IRC SWDD

Destin-Fort Walton Beach Teams Up to Clean Up the Gulf

This past September, 49 divers and more than 30 volunteers gathered at sunrise to participate in an underwater cleanup at the Okaloosa Island Fishing Pier in Destin-Fort Walton Beach. The effort, spearheaded by the Okaloosa County Coastal Resource Team, resulted in the removal of nearly 300 pounds of debris inclusive of monofilament, a tire, cans, plastic, sunglasses, fish poles, and additional items that could cause potential harm to marine life in the Gulf of Mexico. *DestinFWB.com*



Volunteers joining in the underwater cleanup in Destin-Fort Walton Beach include members of the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office and the Divers Down Pollution Project.

Visit South Walton Joins Beach Ambassadors to Host 2021 International Coastal Cleanup

Visit South Walton, in partnership with Friends of South Walton Sea Turtles Volunteer Beach Ambassador Team, hosted the 2021 International Coastal Cleanup on September 18. In total, 362 volunteers each spent about two hours cleaning the beach for a combined 724 hours of service. Tally sheets from volunteers indicate that 4,028 cigarette butts, 2,655 small plastic pieces, and 515 food wrappers combined with thousands of pieces of other trash were removed from the sand. *VisitSouthWalton.com*



Volunteers of all ages clear thousands of pieces of trash from South Walton beaches on September 18.



Polk County Honored With Multiple *ConventionSouth* Awards

Polk County has received three Readers' Choice Awards from *ConventionSouth*, the South's leading meetings industry magazine. Visit Central Florida - Polk County (VCF) and destination partners the RP Funding Center and Streamsong Resort have received these prestigious honors in 2021. More than 8,000 readers and fans voted to select meeting sites and destinations across the South that they believe provide exemplary service for group events. VCF and the RP Funding Center are both two-time winners, and this is the fourth award for Streamsong Resort. All three will be featured in a special December 2021 awards issue of *ConventionSouth*. VisitCentralFlorida.org



Bradenton Area Sustainable Tourism Campaign Receives Honors

The Bradenton Area's integrated marketing campaign Love It Like a Local recently received recognition from the state, taking home two VISIT FLORIDA Flagler Awards for outstanding sustainable tourism marketing. The first-of-its-kind campaign encouraged responsible visitation, focusing on the importance of preservation, respect for wildlife, sustainability, and more. The Love It Like a Local campaign included multiple interactive elements and a grand prize trip giveaway, earning Bronze for television advertising and Silver for tourism marketing. BradentonGulfIslands.com



Bradenton Area CVB's Michelle Stewart, marketing manager, and Kelly Clark, chief marketing officer, accept the CVB's two Flagler Awards.

Experience Kissimmee Shares Annual Recap With Industry

Experience Kissimmee hosted its annual meeting on October 8, welcoming 200 industry partners and sharing accomplishments and noteworthy announcements from the last year and what's to come in 2022. The event opened with remarks by President/CEO DT Minich and featured updates from all of EK's departments including Business Applications & Insights, Event Management, Industry Partner Relations, International Sales, Kissimmee Sports Commission, Marketing and Communications, and Meeting Sales and Services—plus additional guest speakers throughout the morning. ExperienceKissimmee.com



President/CEO DT Minich gives opening remarks at Experience Kissimmee's annual meeting, hosted by Embassy Suites - Lake Buena Vista South.

Visit Jacksonville and the Beaches Releases Five New Videos in Neighborhood Series

As the largest city by landmass in the continental United States, Jacksonville is made up of more than a dozen unique, diverse neighborhoods. Visit Jacksonville recently released five new videos, highlighting the Mandarin, Downtown, Southside, Murray Hill, and Springfield neighborhoods. Each video features two community members discussing what makes their neighborhood unique and exciting, along with footage of restaurants, murals, parks, and people in the area. Watch the five new videos, along with existing neighborhood videos, at VisitJacksonville.com



The *Neighborhood Conversations* video series features various neighborhoods of Jacksonville, including this one of Downtown.



Space Coast Continues to Surpass Records

August continued the trend of beating records for the Space Coast Office of Tourism. Since the recovery began in March, the Space Coast's March to August period was at \$10.68 million, and just the summer (June-August) was \$5.38 million. The Space Coast is on track to even surpass 2019's record year of \$16 million. September's numbers, and the full year's final budget were scheduled to be out at the end of October. VisitSpaceCoast.com



The first all-civilian mission, Inspiration4 launched and landed successfully off Florida's Space Coast. This image of the plume of gases from the rocket during stage separation, only visible at night, is often called a "space jellyfish." Photo: John Kraus for the Inspiration4 mission

Island Hopper Songwriter Fest Returns

The 7th annual Island Hopper Songwriter Fest, the largest songwriter festival in Southwest Florida, was held September 17-26. It featured 78 songwriters and 113 performances at 21 venues on Captiva, downtown Fort Myers, and Fort Myers Beach. Attendance was estimated at 12,500 with venues reporting slight increases in business over 2019 when the festival last occurred. Island Hopper is produced by the Lee County VCB, iHeartMedia, Cat Country 107.1, and BMI, the largest music rights organization in the United States. FortMyers-Sanibel.com



Academy of Country Music's New Male Artist of the Year Jimmie Allen headlines the Island Hopper Songwriter Fest at Pink Shell Beach Resort & Marina on Fort Myers Beach.

Tasty Times Return on Florida's Historic Coast

Thousands of festival goers savored the flavors at the May 2021 St. Augustine Food + Wine Festival, the first major event to take place on Florida's Historic Coast since March 2020. This inaugural event was a culinary collaboration that showcased the skills of leading local and celebrity guest chefs along with winemakers and local craft spirits and beer producers. Combined with live music and a variety of events for all taste buds, the festival will return May 4-8, 2022. FloridasHistoricCoast.com



Festival goers enjoy sampling delicious cuisine at the 2021 St. Augustine Food + Wine Festival.

Visit Pensacola Celebrates Mobile Marketing

Visit Pensacola received a Silver Flagler in Mobile Marketing for its Holiday Trail Campaign at the annual Flagler Awards. The campaign encouraged holiday experiences and promoted a chance to win a vacation. The month-long campaign exceeded goals by large percentages, with 973 app downloads (+236%), 127 trail check-ins (+153%), 3,659 landing page views (+46%), and 53,075 social media impressions (+76%), and generated 484,301 in earned media impressions (+61%). Overall, the Holiday Trail Campaign increased usage and overall awareness of the Experience Pensacola App. VisitPensacola.com



Visit Pensacola team members celebrate their Silver Flagler Award for the Holiday Trail Campaign in Mobile Marketing at the VISIT FLORIDA Governor's Conference on Tourism.



Quick Trips!

Travel Writer Jo Clark Visits Gainesville, Alachua County

Visit Gainesville, Alachua County is a partner in Natural North Florida, a task force formed to promote off-the-beaten path and natural attractions tourism in North Central Florida. Together with partner counties, Alachua County hosted travel writer Jo Clark developing extensive new content for *NaturalNorthFlorida.com* and yielding an article for *Food, Wine, and Travel* magazine. NNF partners also attended the Atlanta Travel and Adventure Show in October promoting the region's natural attractions and resources to thousands of consumers well as travel advisors. *VisitGainesville.com*



Travel writer Jo Clark relaxes at the Herlong Mansion Bed & Breakfast.



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Visit Jacksonville's Katie Mitura Promoted to CMO

Visit Jacksonville is proud to announce the promotion of Katie Mitura to chief marketing officer. Mitura began her career at Visit Jacksonville more than 17 years ago, working to support sales efforts for Super Bowl XXXIX. Since then, she worked to support meeting and business travel sales before starting work in the marketing department in 2008. As CMO, Mitura will focus on the strategic direction of marketing the destination to leisure and business travelers while overseeing the marketing team. VisitJacksonville.com



Katie Mitura

entire organization," says Tracy Vaughan, senior VP, global trade development for Visit Lauderdale. Mason's 35-year career in the hotel and tourism industry has included national and global positions. Sunny.org

Daytona Beach Area CVB's Kay Galloway Earns Certification

Daytona Beach Area CVB Marketing & Design Director Kay Galloway has earned national certification as a Travel Marketing Professional (TMP) from the Southeast Tourism Society (STS) Marketing College. Galloway has held the position of marketing and design director with the Daytona Beach Area CVB since 2018 where she leads all domestic and international consumer marketing efforts and creative standards for the CVB. DaytonaBeach.com



Kay Galloway

Visit Lauderdale Welcomes Paul Mason

Visit Lauderdale welcomes Paul Mason as senior manager, global trade development with a primary focus on the international inbound market. Mason joins the destination marketing organization representing the Greater Fort Lauderdale region from Wyndham Hotels and Resorts. "Paul's extensive experience managing strategic partners on a global basis will be a positive asset to our



Paul Mason



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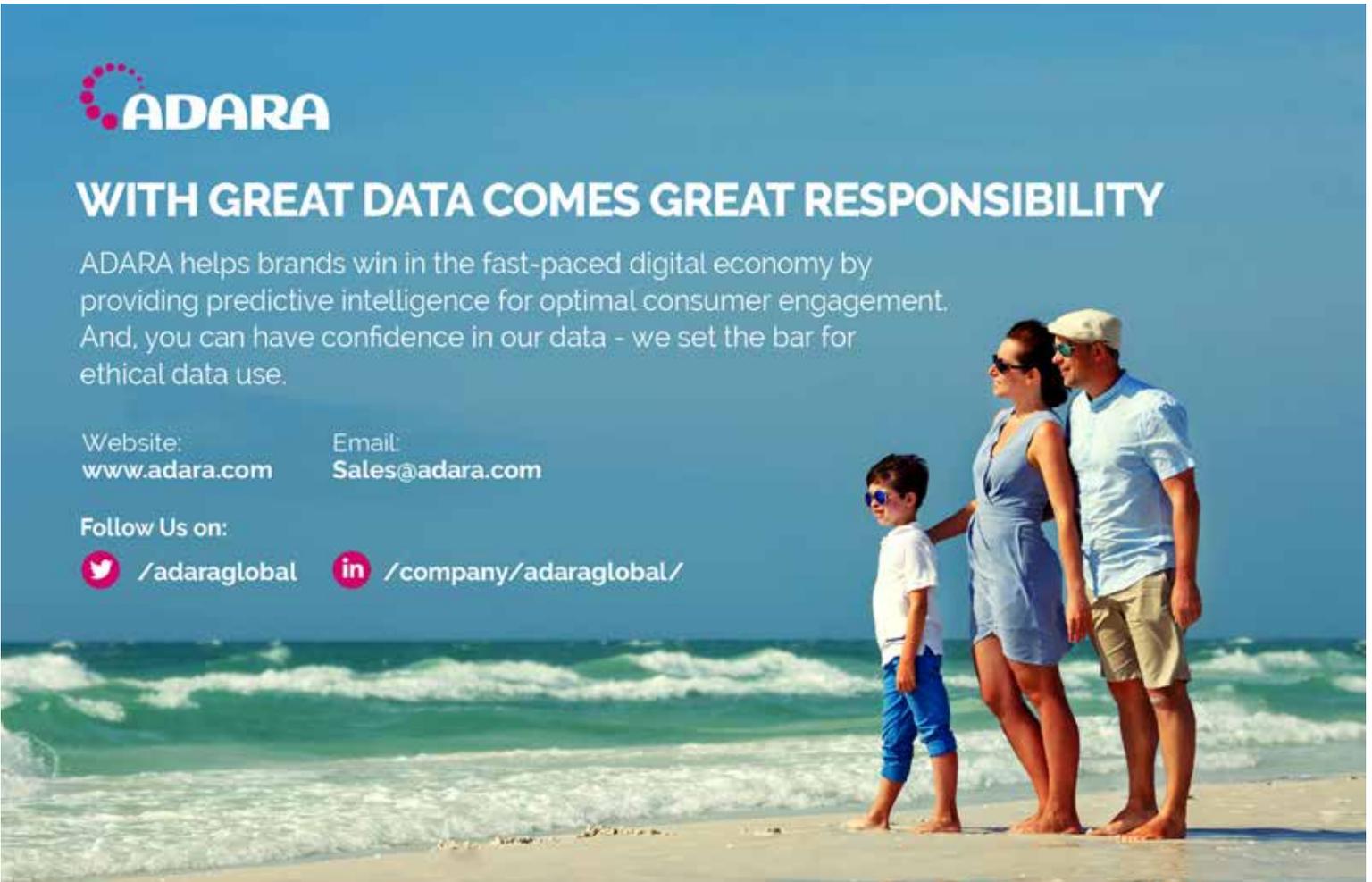
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INSIDE: Three great lessons from the Destinations Florida annual meeting

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Destinations Florida



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 55 official county DMOs that promote their communities throughout the world. Tourism promotion activities help to attract 131.4 million visitors to Florida, adding \$96.5 billion to Florida's economy and supporting more than 1.6 million jobs. These activities are made possible by Tourist Development Taxes provided by Florida Statutes Section 125.0104. Statistics: VISIT FLORIDA Research

DESTINATIONS FLORIDA