

Eyes trained on adventure

Swiss rail tours hit great heights

PAGE 42

TEXAS HAT-TIP: SAN ANTONIO PREVIEW

PAGE 24

THIS IS HOW WE BROADWAY

PAGE 14

SAMPLE THE SPIRIT OF LOUISVILLE

PAGE 29

Hiking in Switzerland's
Lötschberg mountains



OVER 5,000 TRAILS BLAZED DAILY.

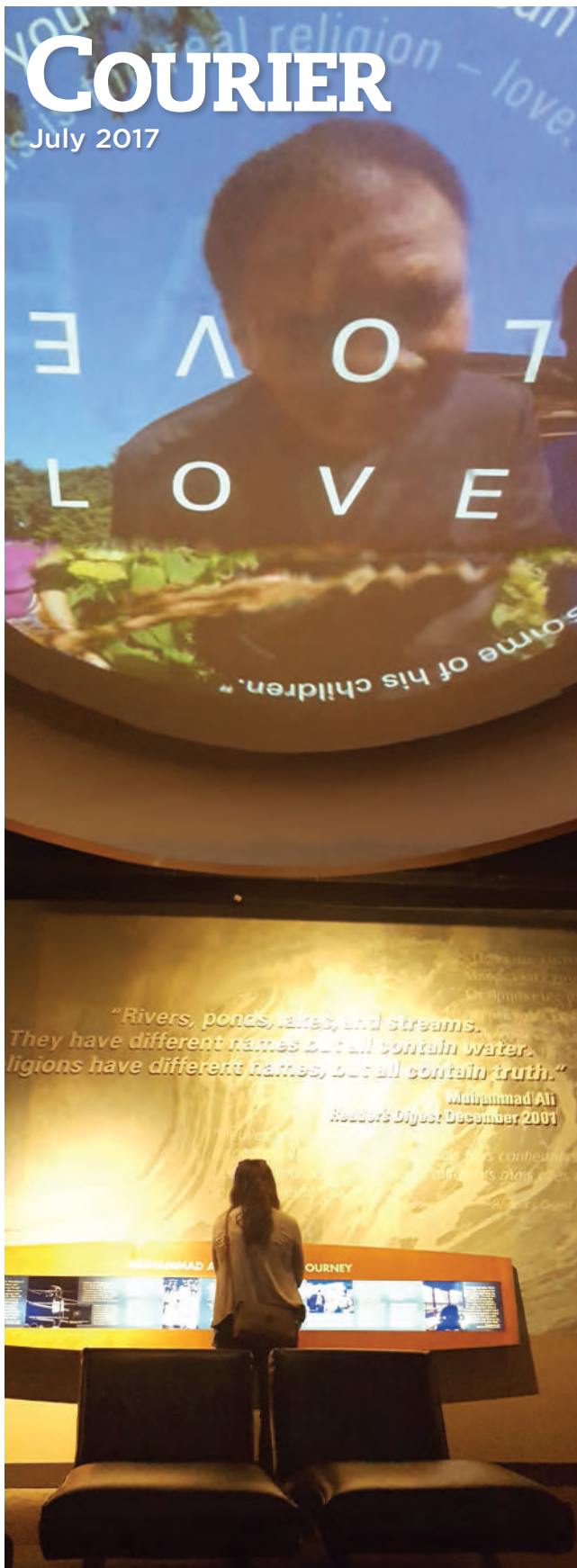
Your next opportunity is a flight away. Just ask the 170 million passengers who choose to fly to one of our 327 destinations.



KEEP CLIMBING



Based on average number of Delta flights per day in the March 2016 schedule. Includes flights operated by our Delta Connection® carriers: Compass Airlines, Endeavor Air, Inc., ExpressJet Airlines, Inc., GoJet Airlines, Shuttle America, and SkyWest; Delta Shuttle® carriers: Shuttle America and Compass Airlines.



GABE WEBB

Find you center: The Muhammad Ali Center in Louisville, Kentucky, offers a play-by-play analysis of the boxer's life and the core principles of character by which he lived. For more on this and other Louisville tour product, turn to page 29.

Features



Preview to San Antonio

In preparation for December's Travel Exchange, take a look at what the host city has to offer.



City Spotlight: Louisville

Kentucky's biggest city might be best-known for the Derby, but tour operators will find plenty to love year-round in Louisville.

Compass

34 South Central U.S.

Small towns loom large in Tennessee

No shortage of suggestions for Chattanooga

Bardstown, it's an honor

Arts, crafts, music ... and bacon

38 Pacific Northwest

Outdoor adventure, First Nations sites dot B.C.'s Cariboo Chilcotin Coast region

Capitalize on the bounty of the Olympia region

The best of Baker County

Explore Oregon's most renowned orchards

42 Germany and Switzerland

Your source for Swiss rail adventures

The Appina of your eye

43 India

Unite and unwind in India

Food for the soul: culinary tours of India

NTA President

Pam Inman pam.inman@ntastaff.com

Editorial

Editor Bob Rouse bob.rouse@ntaservicesinc.com

Senior Writer Pat Henderson pat.henderson@ntaservicesinc.com

Writer Gabe Webb gabe.webb@ntaservicesinc.com

Contributors Emily Ayscue, Kendall Fletcher, Catherine Heeg, Pam Inman, Ogniana Ivanova-Sriram, The Signal Group

Graphic Design Jeff Quire

Advertising

President, NTA Services Inc. Kami Risk kami.risk@ntaservicesinc.com

Account Executive/Eastern U.S. & International Beth Engel beth.engel@ntaservicesinc.com

Account Executive/Western U.S. Kelley Burchell kelly.burchell@ntaservicesinc.com

Account Executive/Central U.S. & Canada Bond Milburn bond.milburn@ntaservicesinc.com

Production Manager Ashley Fish ashley.fish@ntaservicesinc.com

Billing Inquiries Mary Catherine Dorsett marycatherine.dorsett@ntaservicesinc.com

PLANNING AHEAD

To view the 2017 editorial calendar, visit NTAonline.com/advertising. NTA members can submit tour product information or editorial queries to bob.rouse@ntaservicesinc.com. And for advertising information, call +1.859.264.6559.

► OCTOBER ISSUE

DESTINATIONS

New England

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts,
New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont

Great Plains

Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma,
South Dakota

China

Vietnam

City Spotlight: Nashville, Tennessee

SPECIAL COVERAGE

Music Destinations and Attractions
Guide: Theaters and Broadway Shows

DEADLINES

Space: Aug. 4 | Material: Aug. 14

► NOVEMBER ISSUE

DESTINATIONS

America's Historic East

Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia,
Washington, D.C.

Atlantic Canada

New Brunswick, Newfoundland & Labrador,
Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island)

Caribbean

South Pacific

Australia, Guam, Hawaii

City Spotlight: New Orleans

SPECIAL COVERAGE

Travel Exchange '17 Preview (San Antonio)
Guide: Hotels and Lodging

DEADLINES

Space: Sept. 8 | Material: Sept. 18

NTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee

Chairman

Jay Smith

Sports Travel and Tours
jay@sportstravelandtours.com

Vice Chair

J. Chris Babb

The Group Tour Company
chris@grouptourcompany.com

Secretary

Paul Larsen

Ed-Ventures
pcl@ed-ventures.com

Immediate Past Chair

Justin Osbon

Image Tours
justin@imagetours.com

DMO Director

Kelly Dean

Ottawa Tourism
kdean@ottawatourism.ca

Tour Supplier Director

Jodi Danyluk

Norwegian Cruise Line
jdanyluk@ncl.com

Directors

Misha Jovanovic

Misha Tours
misha@mishatours.com

Edita Kronic

Select International Tours
edita@select-intl.com

Jim Magrath

Delta Air Lines
jim.magrath@delta.com

Frances Manzitto

Visit Clarksville
frances@visitclarksvilletn.com

Dennis McDonnell

Alaska Coach Tours
dennis@alaskacoachtours.com

John McGlade

Euro River Cruises
jmcglade@eurorivercruises.com

Jim Warren, CTP

Anderson Vacations
jwarren@andersonvacations.ca

Tracie Wingo

Globus
twingo@globusfamily.com

Directors at Large

Lydia Grieg-Hansen

Destination Southwest
lydia@destinationsouthwest.com

Dean Jacobberger

Visit California
djacobberger@visitcalifornia.com

Christian Van Meter

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group
cvanmeter@carlsonrezidor.com



PUBLISHED BY NTA SERVICES, INC. Email: kami.risk@ntaservicesinc.com

COURIER (USPS 602270, ISSN 0279-4489)(Vol. 44, Issue 6) published 10 times a year by NTA Services, Inc., 101 Prosperous Place, Suite 350, Lexington, KY 40509. Periodicals Postage Paid at Lexington, Kentucky, and additional mailing offices. Subscription rate is \$60 per year.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Courier*, 101 Prosperous Place, Suite 350, Lexington, KY 40509.

COURIER is the official licensed publication of NTA®, an international trade association of the packaged travel industry. Copyright© 2017, NTA Services, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any way or by any means, electrical, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without written permission of *Courier*, except for quotations made for purposes of a review. All inquiries should be sent to *Courier* magazine, 101 Prosperous Place, Suite 350, Lexington, KY 40509, +1.859.264.6559. Additional subscriptions can be purchased by calling +1.859.264.6559. Printed in USA.

Advertising rates are available upon request. For a change of address, subscribers may notify *Courier* directly, by email or letter.

COURIER'S MISSION STATEMENT

Courier aims to facilitate member-to-member partnering by spotlighting member product and destinations worldwide, to provide information on current industry trends and issues, and to inform members about NTA initiatives, events and benefits.



Courier is printed on 100% recyclable material



4 From the Editor

6 Voices of Leadership

Business

8 InBrief

Want to run for the NTA Board of Directors? | Tour operators: Vote for *Courier's* Distinguished Dozen | July 14 is the deadline for deep Travel Exchange discounts

10 Relating to Government

NTA's lobbying firm, Signal Group, answers questions about how President Trump's proposed 2018 budget could impact the travel industry.

12 What your customers need to know regarding international travel

Check out the resources available for tour operators who work with American citizens traveling overseas and international visitors coming to the U.S.

14 The Interview

Bob Hofmann of Broadway Inbound discusses how he works with tour operators, what today's groups look like and how they get their theater on.

16 Not her first rodeo

NTA's Katey Pease, who oversees event operations, answers preeminent questions about TREX '17 in San Antonio.

19 A groundswell of gratitude

Following her first Tourism Cares project in May, NTA staffer Kendall Fletcher reflects on the Detroit event.

20 7 secrets to better event marketing

Catherine Heeg highlights underutilized social media tools that help you create buzz around tours and events.

22 What's On

Leeuwarden and Valletta ready to shine as 2018 European capitals of culture | Motor City majesty | I'll be [in Myrtle Beach] for Christmas | Oh boy, it's St. Croix

Resources

44 *Courier's* Guide to NTA-member Shopping Venues

Community

50 Meet the Members

Major Marine Tours | Vermont Tourism Network | Sioux Falls CVB | Elizabeth Destination Marketing Organization

52 Community News

Tourism Richmond, Mayflower Tours welcome new executives, and other news from the NTA family.

54 New Members

55 Ad Index/NTA Events Calendar

56 AfterWords

Tourism Cares scholarship winner Emily Ayscue recognized the importance of building relationships when she attended Travel Exchange '17.

Courier has used images existing in the public domain or made available from sources including, but not limited to, Flickr and Wikimedia Commons under a Creative Commons Attribution Generic License. The full text of the Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic License is available at bit.ly/1gDYjzM. Images used may have been altered by cropping or adjusted for contrast, saturation, size, color, clarity or otherwise digitally manipulated to meet design specifications. *Courier's* use of Creative Commons and public domain images does not constitute or suggest the licensor's explicit or implied endorsement of *Courier*, its content, staff, contributors, advertisers or any other use by *Courier*.

Just Bring One!

NTA Chair Jay Smith says ...

Just Bring One!
And we'll put
money in your
pocket.

Making \$ is fun when you Just Bring One!

When you refer or recruit a member who joins NTA from May 1 to Oct. 1, you'll get **\$50**. And if that member also signs up for Travel Exchange '17 in San Antonio, we'll make it **\$100**. (Or NTA can credit you \$100.) You're also eligible for a grand prize!

Call 800.682.8886 or email debby.alley@ntastaff.com with your referrals today!

#JustBringOne



**Bob Rouse**

Editor
101 Prosperous Place, Suite 350
Lexington, KY 40509 USA
+1.859.264.6548
bob.rouse@ntaservicesinc.com

YOU'RE NO DOUBT FAMILIAR with "Tighten Up," the No. 1 hit song from 1968 by Archie Bell & the Drells. Or maybe you're not familiar. It's possible you weren't alive in 1968. Heck, it's possible your *parents* weren't alive in 1968. So I'll catch you up.

"Tighten Up" is an early funk tune that begins with Archie, in spoken words, introducing himself and the band, stating they're from Houston, Texas. Then he gives a brief, self-confident assessment of the group: "We don't only sing, but we dance just as good as we want."

Archie then says they invented a new dance named—wait for it—the Tighten Up, and the rest of the song is the music they "tighten up with."

We dance just as good as we want. I've always liked that line. It speaks of talent held in check only by the prudence of Mr. Bell and his associates. I'd like to think we all have limitless talent in some area, and we regulate the amount of expertise deployed at any given time.

Here in the *Courier* office, we might say, "We don't only write, but we edit just as good as we want." And that's true. Any good editor has to be judicious with the red ink; too much criticism can demoralize a writer. (Remember that.)

What about you? What talent do you possess in spades? (An example: "I don't only drive, but I parallel park just as good as I want.")

Go ahead and fill in the blanks: "I don't only _____, but I _____ just as good as I want." And then tweet it to us, @NTAnews, with the hashtag #ArchieBell. (Or if you don't use Twitter just as good as you want, email me: bob.rouse@ntastaff.com.)

July Courier Destination Index

Alaska 50	San Antonio 24-26
British Columbia 38	South Carolina 23
Germany 42	South Dakota 51
India 43	Switzerland 42
Kentucky 29-32, 36	Tennessee 34-35
Malta 22	Vermont 50
Michigan 23	Washington 39
The Netherlands 22	West Virginia 37
New Jersey 51	Wisconsin 23
Oregon 40-41	



It's time to tighten up this letter. The July issue has home-state hooks for me. Gabe Webb shares his experiences in Louisville in this month's City Spotlight, starting on page 29. And my roundup of South Central states (pages 34-37) includes a peek at Bardstown, Kentucky. Both stories mention bourbon. We can't help it.

On pages 24-26, Gabe also gives us a preview to San Antonio, our host city for Travel Exchange this coming December.

Pat Henderson covers his beloved Pacific Northwest on pages 38-41. And our newest regular contributor, Kendall Fletcher, gives a heartfelt shout-out to the city of Detroit following her Tourism Cares project work there (page 19).

More singing and dancing: Bob Hofmann of Broadway Inbound gives us a front-row seat to the trends that are shaping group experiences at New York City theaters.

There's more in these pages, of course, but I don't want to give away the entire plot. *Courier* not only informs, you know, but it surprises just as good as it wants.

Read on,

On the cover:

Visitors to Switzerland can enjoy the scenery from trails and rails. For more about Swiss tours, turn to page 42.

Photo: swiss-image.ch/
Matthias Pfammatter



* This line has often been misunderstood to be "... we dance just as good as we walk." But Archie Bell himself set the, um, record straight: "We dance just as good as we want. Hell, we dance a lot better than we walk."

MY GAME

IS UNRIVALED LUXURY AND EXCITEMENT.

Escape to Washington's premier gaming destination. Luxury and excitement combine to promise an unforgettable experience - ***This is My Tulip.***



30 MINUTES NORTH OF SEATTLE
888.272.1111 | TULALIPCASINO.COM





Pam Inman

President
101 Prosperous Place, Suite 350
Lexington, KY 40509 USA
+1.859.264.6551
pam.inman@ntastaff.com

I'VE HAD A BUSY MONTH, FRIENDS. Fasten your seat belt and read all about it.

Washington, D.C., did an amazing job of hosting IPW and showing off the U.S. capital city in June. It was great to see so many NTA faces and make new friends—and recruit new members—at the event. Thanks to the more than 50 of you who attended our NTA reception; it was a wonderful way to start off the week.

The Tourism Cares event at the National Mall, held in conjunction with IPW, was fun and a lot of hard work. Just the weekend before, I was a tourist there. A few days later, I was pulling weeds and getting pebbles out of grates!

Prior to IPW, I traveled to Kissimmee, Florida, for the 15th anniversary meeting of our strategic partner Travel Professionals of Color. It was such an honor to speak to this group and meet the awesome women who had the courage to start this association.

While I was in Florida, NTA held a Meet-up in Orlando at the newly refurbished Planet Hollywood. Thanks to Ashleigh Zeigler and Planet Hollywood for hosting us. We already have seen several attendees become new members!

Also in May, I went by train from D.C. to New York City to meet with Lu Yangzheng, the vice governor of China's Guizhou province. We discussed a partnership and formally signed an agreement at a promotional event in the United Nations Building. We had worked on the partnership for several weeks, but I was happy that Rob Maclin, our attorney, wasn't there to watch because the document was all in Mandarin. So, while I was pretty sure I knew what I was signing, I felt better after director of the China Inbound Program, Lin Wang, who traveled with me, translated it. We have invited our friends from Guizhou to Travel Exchange in San Antonio to share their beautiful province with you.

While in New York, Lin and I also met with Yanjie Wang, director of the China National Tourist Office, and we signed a memorandum of understanding for research and other services we will do for the CNTO. One more China note: Chris Babb of The Group Tour Company, your NTA vice chair,



Pam Inman at IPW, meeting with representatives of the U.S. Department of Commerce

joined Lin and me for the inaugural launch of Norwegian's first Chinese cruise ship, *Norwegian Joy*. The ship sailed from Shanghai to Nagasaki and back. Many of our China Inbound Program operators were aboard, and we have to say thanks to Norwegian for inviting us and to Delta for providing our airfare.

I told you in the March issue about traveling to India for the opening of the U.S.-India Travel and Tourism Partnership Year. I'm now pleased to say we have formed a new partnership with the India Tour Operators Association. We are excited to help link you to this growing market. Visitation from India to the U.S., which was 724,000 in 2012, is projected to reach nearly 2 million by 2021.

Speaking of international inbound travel to the U.S., I hope you saw the statement we issued about preserving Brand USA after the White House proposed cutting it. We've reached out to Congress to let them know that keeping this marketing arm of the U.S. intact is vital to the nation's jobs and economy.

After traveling to Tucson to support our members at Travel Alliance Partners' TAP Dance, I was eager to get back to NTA HQ so I could welcome the newest member of our NTA team, Kay Saffari, who serves as coordinator of the Faith Travel Association and our Hispanic market initiative. Kay has an amazing background and a wealth of talent.

If you don't remember anything else about this letter, I hope it reminded you that we are constantly trying to improve NTA and give you the ability to do more business. And I'm always eager to hear from you, so don't hesitate to call or email me.

Pam

ALL ROADS LEAD TO MOHEGAN SUN

Sign up your group for a bus charter today



BONUS \$30 CASINO INCENTIVE PACKAGE*

Monday – Friday Package consists of: One \$15 Meal/Retail Credit and One \$15 Free Bet Coupon
Meal/Retail credit can be used in any restaurant, a full buffet or shop at Mohegan Sun.

BONUS \$25 CASINO INCENTIVE PACKAGE*

Saturday – Sunday Package consists of: One \$15 Meal/Retail Credit and One \$10 Free Bet Coupon
Meal/Retail credit can be used in any restaurant, a full buffet or shop at Mohegan Sun.

Group Leaders receive an additional \$30 PACKAGE

Contact Stephen Olender at 860.862.8988
or solender@mohegansun.com or visit
mohegansun.com/charter to get your
next outing on the road today.

*In order to receive package, bus group must stay for a minimum of 5 hours. Packages and offer subject to change without notice. mohegansun.com



COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON

Want to run for the NTA Board of Directors?

Well, now is your chance. The NTA Nominating Committee is accepting applications through July 28 from tour operators, tour suppliers and destination marketing organization representatives who are interested in serving on the 2018 NTA Board of Directors.

Board candidates come from the three main membership categories and represent a range of geographic locations, occupational specialties and diversity of business/product.

Open positions for 2018 include:

- Vice chairman—must be a tour operator (one-year term)
- Secretary—must be a tour operator (one-year term)
- Three tour operator directors (three-year terms)
- Two supplier directors (one will serve a two-year term, the other will serve a three-year term)

- Two DMO directors (one will serve a two-year term, the other will serve a three-year term)

Interested candidates should request an application from NTA Industry & Member Engagement Manager Morgan Maravich via email at morgan.maravich@ntastaff.com. All applications must be completed and returned by Friday, July 28, at 5 p.m. EDT.

Once applications are received, the Nominating Committee will review them and conduct interviews. They will then put forth a slate of candidates—one nominee for each position—and there will be a period when nominations from the floor are received. After that, the final ballot will go out in early November, and voting will conclude Dec. 15 at Travel Exchange in San Antonio.

Tour operators: Vote for *Courier's* Distinguished Dozen

The first round of balloting will open this month for the seventh *Courier* Distinguished Dozen awards. Tour operators will receive the survey via email, which asks them to vote for tour supplier and DMO organizations based on the quality of the product, their level of customer service, the value they offer their customers and their dedication to relationship building.

Following the first stage of write-in balloting, results will be tabulated to narrow the field to the top five vote-getters in each of the 12 categories. A second email will go out asking operators to choose among the finalists to determine the gold, silver and bronze winners.

Results will be announced in late August, then information on all the winners will appear in the December 2017 issue of *Courier*. Award recipients also will be recognized as part of a luncheon in San Antonio at Travel Exchange.



July 14 is the deadline for deep Travel Exchange discounts

Circle **July 14** on your calendar.

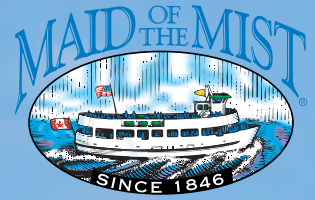
If you're a tour supplier or DMO who didn't attend in St. Louis, you have until **July 14** to receive a \$300 early-bird discount when you register for Travel Exchange '17 in San Antonio (Dec. 14-18). And if you attended Travel Exchange in St. Louis, **July 14** is the last day you can receive half-off registration fees for the San Antonio convention.

Visit NTAonline.com/convention and sign up today to experience the one show where 80 percent of NTA tour operators can only be found—Travel Exchange. 📍



Deep in the heart #TREX17

AMERICA'S MOST MONUMENTAL EXPERIENCE SINCE 1846



Boats Depart from Niagara Falls, USA ★ MaidoftheMist.com ★ 716.284.8897

RELATING TO GOVERNMENT

INSIGHTS ON U.S. LEGISLATIVE ISSUES AND INDUSTRY TOPICS



Dissecting President Trump's proposed budget

ON MAY 23, President Trump released his proposed budget for fiscal year 2018, kicking off the funding debate in Washington, D.C. Congress must complete funding legislation by Sept. 30, 2017, and with several high-priority items still on the legislative schedule for Congress, FY18 appropriations only add to the uncertainty.

Signal Group, NTA's legislative advisors, answered *Courier's* questions about the administration's proposed budget, the congressional appropriations process and the current environment within the Beltway.

Courier: What are the highlights of the president's proposed budget?

Signal Group: It reduces federal spending by \$3.6 trillion over 10 years, with significant cuts across the board to domestic, non-defense programs. The administration contends that a combination of aggressive cuts and three percent annual economic growth would balance the budget by 2027.

President Trump's request outlines a \$4.1 trillion budget for FY18, with \$1.15 trillion of that directed to discretionary spending. The significant differences between White House and congressional spending priorities are likely to pose a challenge for reaching agreement on FY18 spending levels. This is compounded by the fact that the administration's budget violates the caps established by the Budget Control Act of 2011. This likely will require Congress to address fundamental issues related to the balance between defense and non-defense spending, as well as the scheduled return of sequestration, a law that limits the size of the federal budget.

Courier: How does this budget address priorities of the travel and tourism industry?

Signal Group: For the industry, it's important to focus on the proposed budget levels for the Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, Transportation Security Administration and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, as they each regulate different modes of travel and security. Under President Trump's proposed budget, both the DOT and FAA take significant cuts. The proposed budget aims to create a more streamlined DOT; it's unlikely, however, that the 16 percent cut proposed by the president will be implemented by Congress.

Travel and tourism caucus leaders in the House and Senate are ready to fight for programs that have helped bring more positive experiences to tourists.

With regard to Department of Homeland Security agencies, which include CBP, the president proposed an increase of almost \$3 billion, including \$100 million for additional staffing. Ironically, the TSA could face cuts. The number of Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response teams, which patrol public areas of airports beyond security checkpoints, along with bus and train stations, would drop from 31 to eight. Additionally, the budget proposes an Aviation Passenger Security Fee increase from \$5.60 to \$6.60 for each connecting flight, which would generate about \$530 million more for aviation security. Construction and other non-personnel items are also proposed to be cut.

Courier: What about Brand USA?

Signal Group: The president also proposes to eliminate Brand USA, which promotes the country overseas as a tourist destination, and shift its revenue to CBP. This proposal has not been well received on Capitol Hill and within the industry. Many lawmakers and trade groups, including NTA, have already declared opposition to this part of the proposal.

Keep in mind that while President Trump's proposed cuts can have a significant impact on the industry, this is just one part of the process, and Congress can accept or reject any portion of the proposed budget.

Courier: Will Congress support our industry?

Signal Group: The travel and tourism industry has broad support on Capitol Hill. Travel and tourism caucus leaders in the House and Senate are ready to fight for programs that have helped bring more positive experiences to tourists, both international and domestic. Remember: Travel and tourism is America's biggest export industry, and members of Congress don't want to hurt a large part of our economy. Brand USA has played a significant role in the industry's success, and eliminating it would not be well received.

Courier: What does the proposed budget reveal about the administration's plans for infrastructure?

Signal Group: An interesting piece of the administration's proposed budget was the inclusion of an "infrastructure initiative" fact sheet. The administration has stated intentions to invest \$200 billion of federal spending in infrastructure in the hopes of leveraging \$800 billion in private investment. However, the proposed budget first cuts a number

of highway construction programs to pay for the \$200 million in federal funding. For example, the plan proposes decreasing federal spending on projects of local or regional significance and would count money cut from existing programs (and redirected towards new projects) as part of the \$200 billion total investment in infrastructure.

Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao has said that the administration's plan will go beyond traditional infrastructure categories like highways, transit, rail, waterways and ports to also include energy, water, broadband and veterans' hospitals—all good things for the U.S. economy and, most, for the travel and tourism industry.

Courier: How will Congress respond?

Signal Group: We think Republican Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, who chairs the Senate appropriations transportation subcommittee, summed it up perfectly: "The president's budget request is always subject to significant revision

by Congress, and this budget will be no exception. Throughout my time in the Senate, I have never seen a president's budget make it through Congress unchanged."

The reaction on the Hill has not been supportive to date, and we're reminded of an old adage: "The president proposes, and Congress disposes."

Courier: What are the next steps in the process?

Signal Group: Now that the president has released his request, the focus shifts to Congress. Think of the proposed budget as a starting point for the entire process. Congress has begun holding hearings, meeting with stakeholders and examining the proposed budget to come up with their own legislation. This is done through 12 separate appropriations bills, each generated by a specific subcommittee covering individual federal agencies or groupings of agencies. This process works in identical fashion in both the House and Senate.

In recent years, few of the appropriations bills have been passed as stand-alone bills. The process generally has led to the House passing a number of bills that await Senate action, and as time expires, Congress enacts a series of continuing resolutions. CRs are short-term spending bills that typically maintain funding levels at the previous year's levels. Once the legislators are ready to negotiate and finalize details on long-term funding, Congress then lumps appropriation bills together into an omnibus package. But with a Sept. 30 deadline for the FY18 bills, Congress has little time to act on this process, let alone pass 12 separate appropriations bills. There's still much uncertainty surrounding the timing of what will happen with funding, but it's sure to be a wild ride. 🌀

Signal Group is a Washington, D.C., lobbying firm retained by NTA to advise members about travel-related issues and legislation.



NTA members save up to 34%*
on UPS® shipping services



The National Tour Association is proud to bring you valuable discounts on the products and services you need. Make the most out of your membership and take advantage of competitive rates available on UPS shipping services. Whether you need your documents or packages to arrive the next day or are looking for an affordable shipping option, UPS understands the importance of speed, reliability, and cost.

To save on your UPS shipments, simply:

Call: 1-800-MEMBERS (1-800-636-2377) M-F, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. EST

Visit: savewithups.com/nta



*See savewithups.com/nta for specific services and discounts. All discounts apply to the effective UPS Standard List Rates at the time of shipment and shall be applied on a weekly basis, unless otherwise specified. UPS, the UPS brandmark and the color brown are trademarks of United Parcel Service of America, Inc. and are used with the permission of the owner. All rights reserved.

Official NTA Corporate Partner

How travel professionals can support clients traveling abroad

BY OGNIANA IVANOVA-SRIRAM
CONSULAR AFFAIRS OFFICE OF POLICY
COORDINATION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

EVERY YEAR, tens of millions of U.S. citizens travel abroad, and the United States welcomes tens of millions of international visitors. A significant percentage of all those domestic and foreign travelers use the services of tour operators and travel agents to book all or part of their trip. Many travelers also elect to consult travel professionals for advice before and during their vacations.

Now, thanks to the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs, those agents and tour operators can easily find information about Department of State services.

To make the search for answers easier, the department has compiled the most frequently requested information on one useful webpage: travel.state.gov/travelagents. Designed specifically for travel professionals, the page has two distinct parts: one addressing relevant topics for travel professionals assisting U.S. travelers, and the other for those organizing trips for international visitors traveling to the United States.

The Department of State's new website is a treasure-trove of useful information that will assist you in better handling your clients' travel needs before and during their trip.

So, what should travel professionals know to better assist U.S. clients?

For any trip overseas, preparation is crucial. The Department of State has created a traveler's checklist, which is available on the website as a downloadable PDF. It prints in a convenient wallet-sized format and can be included in the documents travelers carry with them.

Encourage travelers to get informed by using the Learn About Your Destination tool, which has a wealth of information on each country. Make sure travelers have required documents for their destination: passport, visas and the applicable documents if traveling with children. In particular, travelers should check that passports are valid for at least six months beyond their scheduled return date.

The travel professionals' website also provides information on applying for a new passport, current processing times and how to check the status of pending passport applications. You can also find information on fees, the latest photo requirements, instructions on what to do if the client's passport has been lost or stolen, and guidance on ordering passport applications in bulk.

Your U.S. citizen clients should enroll in the free Smart Traveler Enrollment

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program
A SERVICE OF THE BUREAU OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS
U.S. Department of State

Sign In or [Create Account](#) Username Password >>
[Forgot Username or Password?](#)

TRAVELING?
Enroll a trip and get Travel Alerts and Warnings

STAYING AT HOME?
Get Travel Alerts and Warnings

FREQUENT TRAVELER?
Create an account

What is STEP?
The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service to allow U.S. citizens and nationals traveling abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Benefits of Enrolling in STEP

- Receive important information from the Embassy about safety conditions in your destination country, helping you make informed decisions about your travel plans.
- Help the U.S. Embassy contact you in an emergency, whether natural disaster, civil unrest, or family emergency.
- Help family and friends get in touch with you in an emergency.

Program to receive up-to-date safety and security messages and to allow the Department of State to reach them in case of an emergency during their trip. Tour operators traveling with groups overseas, in particular, are advised to sign up with STEP to stay informed about any potential issues.

Even with the best-laid plans, things can go wrong. You should recommend that travelers get medical and travel insurance appropriate to their trip and learn what the Department of State can and cannot do for a U.S. citizen in cases of emergencies overseas. For example, consular staff at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate can help your clients in situations such as a lost or stolen passport, hospitalization, arrest, death or missing person—or if they have been the victim of a crime.

The Department of State also stands ready to assist in the event of a crisis in the country where your client is traveling. The Bureau of Consular Affairs uses its Twitter feed and Facebook page to

communicate timely, actionable information in emergencies.

Visit the website for more in-depth coverage of the range of services provided by U.S. embassies and consulates abroad. There you will also find information on specialized topics like traveling with pets, cruises, TSA Pre-check, Global Entry and religious travel.

Travel professionals supporting visitors from abroad

The website also has resources for travel professionals booking trips to the United States for international travelers. It provides an overview of the B1/B2 visitor and business visas, the online visa application process, and current visa appointment and processing wait times in any U.S. embassy or consulate around the world. Regardless of wait times, travel professionals should advise their clients to apply for a visa far in advance of travel if a visa is required.

There is also information on the Electronic System for Travel

Authorization, also known as ESTA, for visitors from Visa Waiver Program countries who qualify, and on the Electronic Visa Update System, which is required for Chinese tourists and business travelers. In addition, the site has several useful videos that explain the visa application process in simple steps, show what happens at a port of entry upon arrival in the United States, and detail how to use expedited automated entry systems at certain U.S. airports.

The new website is a treasure-trove of useful information that will assist you in better handling your clients' travel needs before and during their trip. Please add these links to your own website for your clients' reference. After all, a better prepared and informed traveler is a safer traveler, one who is much more likely to travel again—using your services. 📍

Ogniana Ivanova-Sriram is an outreach officer in the U.S. Department of State's Consular Affairs Office of Policy Coordination and Public Affairs.



afex.com



Managing currency exposure takes expertise, and our team is the most trusted in the business

At AFEX, we understand the challenges clients face when sending and receiving payments from around the world. Our tailored solutions for international payments and travel money can help you and your clients save time, minimize risk and reduce costs.

Call us today to learn more on: +1 888 428 2339, or visit afex.com.



The Interview

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS FROM NTA MEMBERS

How to enhance the Broadway experience

BY BOB ROUSE

Since 2003, Broadway Inbound has worked with NTA tour operators to seat theater fans at shows in New York City, Washington, D.C., and other cities. For the last two years, the company has enthralled the Travel Exchange luncheon crowd with a song-and-dance revue of current shows—performed by cast members straight outta Broadway. Bob Hofmann, vice president of Broadway Inbound, answered *Courier's* questions about how today's travelers get connected to the theater.

You bring Broadway to NTA members. How do you bring NTA members to Broadway?

Hofmann: Good question! They come by plane, train and automobile. (Isn't that a movie?) Seriously though, from the very start, my goal has been to better connect the travel industry with Broadway. The luncheon sponsorships are a strong component of that connection for certain, but there is nothing better than experiencing the shows in person—in full—on Broadway. For that reason, we provide as many opportunities as possible for operators to see shows, knowing that familiarity with the shows and the whole experience of Broadway will

encourage them to provide that experience for their travelers.

How, then, do tour operators connect their groups to Broadway?

Hofmann: Our work with operators and their groups has changed dramatically over the years. It used to be all about helping the operators choose one show that everyone would most want to see. And that show—featured in a brochure—would help sell the tour. Today, though, it's more about offering choice to the individuals within the group. When you have 50 people on a tour, you probably have 50 different opinions about what to see. We help operators provide that choice at

wholesale rates. We still have full tours going to see one show, which is phenomenal, but with another group, we might send each member to a different show. Choice can really enhance the experience.

Our groups can be domestic, international, young or mature. The common denominator is a desire to share in an experience—Broadway, off Broadway, Radio City or a performance at Lincoln Center—for a very special occasion.

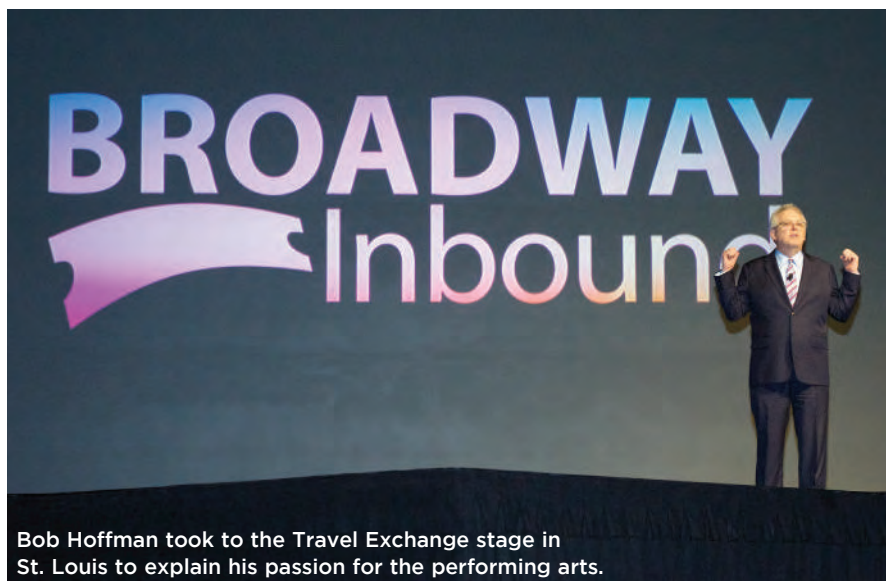
—Bob Hofmann, Broadway Inbound

Tell me about the types of groups that come to your shows.

Hofmann: Students of all ages are big Broadway fans. And the senior market remains important for us, especially with choices added in. We are fortunate in that most travelers coming to New York City want to see a Broadway show or another, related, live performance. We work with so many groups—social outings of all kinds where the group has chosen theater for their family reunion, birthday celebration, or bachelorette party. (One of my favorite group types may be girlfriends traveling together.) Our groups can be domestic, international, young or mature. The common denominator is a desire to share in an experience—Broadway, off Broadway, Radio City or a performance at Lincoln Center—for a very special occasion. It's live, and there is nothing else quite like it ... anywhere.

Do groups typically attend only one show?

Hofmann: Many groups attend more than one, and I mentioned individual choice earlier. I've seen an increasing number of operators that provide one show that everyone will see together



Bob Hoffman took to the Travel Exchange stage in St. Louis to explain his passion for the performing arts.



Bob Hofmann talks theater (and who knows what else) with longtime NTA member John Stachnik of Mayflower Tours on the Travel Exchange floor.

and then, on a second night, individuals choose which show they want. However the operators handle it, the result is that many groups see multiple shows, and we love that. And of course there are always theater junkies who will schedule eight shows in a week. That's what I used to do when I first started traveling to New York. I have to admit that satisfying my theater habit is made a little easier these days by living here.

What would you say to tour operators who are on the fence about packaging Broadway?

Hofmann: Jump off the fence and come talk to me about why you were up there in the first place! I think we can answer any questions you might have. Broadway is a unique destination within New York City. It's absolutely electric, and most travelers coming to the city want to see a show. We want to make sure you can provide them with that experience. 🍷

This interview has been edited for length and clarity. For more information about Broadway Inbound, visit broadwayinbound.com.

Top right: Broadway professionals lead a variety of workshops and tours for groups of any age.

Middle right: The Broadway luncheon at Travel Exchange always attracts the week's largest crowd.

Bottom right: "Waitress" cast members acknowledged the Travel Exchange crowd after performing in St. Louis.



Talkin' TREX with Katey Pease

NTA convention boss shares what's on—and what's new—for San Antonio



Q: Does the early bird really get the worm?

A: For sure. You'll save money with an early-bird registration. Also, the date you register determines when your appointment

schedule is created, so being early in line positions you to get more of the appointments that you want. The first person to register gets the first appointment schedule generated, and the likelihood of your requested appointments being scheduled is greater if you sign up as an early bird than if you register late. You can absolutely get a high-quality schedule at any time, but appointment books for some of the folks with whom you want to meet could fill up fast. So quality appointments and significant savings are two huge factors in registering early.

Q: Everything's bigger in Texas. Any big changes for San Antonio?

A: We focused on attendee feedback from St. Louis and our past events, and one of the things we've really beefed up for December is networking. We added a half-day reception on the first day of the show, which is on Thursday this year,

allowing everyone to come in, walk the floor, visit with the exhibitors and have a drink. The annual Hispanic Travel Market Fiesta is now open to all attendees; we'll hold that in the exhibit hall at the close of business Sunday. We've also opened our show back up to motorcoach exhibitors, so the opportunity is there to have some big equipment on the floor. But the *biggest* thing about being in Texas is that our show is back in the fourth quarter, thanks to our members' requests. And San Antonio will be beautiful in December with holiday lights and décor.

Q: Where are the evening events? And should I wear a cowboy hat?

A: We have three awesome evening events planned. The first is hosted by Visit San Antonio at the newly renovated Witte Museum, a dynamic science and natural history center that just finished a multi-million-dollar renovation. The second night we're going deep into the heart of Texas to celebrate San Antonio's heritage at the LDR & Grotto, so absolutely bring your cowboy hat—and we'd love to see your boots, too! We'll be on the banks of the River Walk in a ranch-like atmosphere where you can get the spirit of the Old West, but it's still

modern and contemporary. And our final night party will be hosted by Six Flags Fiesta Texas, which is a sight to behold that time of year with its impressive display of holiday lights. We'll have the park to ourselves and will enjoy rides and a private performance of their popular holiday show. Members should check the schedule on NTA Online for updates.

Q: This isn't your first rodeo. What do you enjoy most about running Travel Exchange?

A: I just love hearing about all the new connections our attendees make and seeing the old friendships renewed when members get to the convention. We definitely are in a people business, and there's no better place to see people making connections and doing business than at Travel Exchange. This will be my 16th annual meeting and, even though we have many key elements that carry over from year to year, it's really fun to provide new and exciting things affiliated with our host destinations.

Katey Pease, NTA's vice president, business development, oversees event operations for the association. She can be reached at katey.pease@ntastaff.com.

What they're saying about Travel Exchange

A tour operator, DMO and supplier chime in on how NTA's convention works for them.



"The business appointments at NTA are the foundation of our tour-planning process. The face-to-face connections that we make at Travel Exchange are a valuable part of our future working relationships."

—Fraser Neave, Wells Gray Tours; Kamloops, British Columbia; member since 1983



"It's always great to spark an idea or an interest with the buyers. This year [in St. Louis] there seemed to be lots of willingness to learn about new ideas and try something on a tour that they haven't done before."

—Melissa McClure, Visit Fairfax; Fairfax, Virginia; member since 1986



"It's a great opportunity to connect with customers, some we've been working with for 30 years. I enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of social functions, where business relationships become friendships."

—Drew Schmidt, San Juan Cruises; Bellingham, Washington; member since 1990



San Antonio River Walk

VISIT SAN ANTONIO/STUART DEE

travel  exchange

TREX Checks

What: Travel Exchange '17

Where: San Antonio, Texas

When: Dec. 14-18

Web: NTAonline.com/convention

TREX17 Sponsorship Guide

Deep in the heart



You can capture the hearts of NTA buyers by sponsoring at Travel Exchange '17 in beautiful San Antonio—deep in the heart of Texas. Why go after the hearts (and eyeballs) of NTA buyers?

- They move **13.5 million travelers a year**.
- They generate nearly **\$10 billion in annual sales**.
- **80% of NTA buyers only go to Travel Exchange** and do not attend other national shows.

And let's be honest. Travel Exchange sponsors get special benefits: reserved seats at meals, special access to the appointment system, a comped booth and loads of mentions—print, signage and online.

San Antonio

♥ Dec. 14–18

Sponsor Benefits



One complimentary annual NTA membership (2018)	Platinum			
One complimentary Travel Exchange registration (2017)	(\$30,000			
Reserved table for sit-down meal events (excludes buyer-only and fundraising events)	and up)			
Free in-room gift delivery to buyers		Gold		
Insert one double-sided piece in buyer registration bags		(\$15,000–\$29,999)		
➔ Free exhibit booth on NTA's Exchange floor *			Silver	
Sponsor listing on Travel Exchange mobile app			(\$5,000–\$14,999)	Bronze
Guaranteed acceptance into the prescheduled appointments process (1 delegate per sponsorship)				(\$1,000–\$4,999)
Sponsor listing in <i>Courier</i> (Travel Exchange issue)				
Sponsor listing in Profile Form Notebook				
Sponsor listing in Travel Exchange On-site Guide **				
Sponsor listing on NTAonline.com ***				
Database of delegate mailing addresses				
Sponsor ribbon with badge				

* Platinum (20' x 20' booth), Gold (10' x 20' booth), Silver (10' x 10' booth); ** Logo for Platinum, Gold and Silver; name only for Bronze

*** Logo for Platinum, Gold levels; name only for Silver, Bronze levels of sponsorship

Sponsorship Options



Stage Time

Luncheon sponsorships: \$30,000
Opening Ceremony & Breakfast: \$30,000 for exclusive
Faith Travel breakfast: \$3,000

Party Time!

Evening party: \$25,000
Happy hour: \$7,500 + wine from your region
Hispanic Travel Market *Fiesta*: \$5,000
Opening day reception: \$5,000
DMO networking reception: \$3,000

First Impressions

Badge branding: \$15,000
Hotel key cards: \$7,500
Notebooks: \$5,000 + notebooks
Pens: \$5,000 + pens
Buyer registration bag insert: \$1,500 + insert

Refreshment Lounge

Charging station lounge: \$20,000 for exclusive
Caricature artist: \$10,000
Refreshments: \$7,500 + refreshment item
Convenience station: \$5,000

Convention Mall

Relaxation station: \$12,000
Appointment clock: \$10,000 for exclusive
Grab & Go breakfast: \$10,000 for exclusive
Wi-Fi: \$10,000 for exclusive
Cyber center: \$5,000 for exclusive
Faith Travel booth/lounge: \$3,000
Buyer appointment table gift: \$3,000 + gift
Faith Travel booth literature distribution: \$1,000

Major Meetings

Annual business meeting & talk time:
\$5,000 for exclusive
Buyer Power Hour: \$5,000 for exclusive
Board meeting: \$3,000
Board of directors lunch: \$3,000
Seminar: \$3,000
Government Relations Breakfast Bistro: \$2,500

Digital Options

Travel Exchange mobile app: \$3,000
TREXpress e-newsletter: \$1,500
Customized e-blast: \$1,250

TREX Publications

On-site Guide (*book by Sept. 9*)
Cover: \$5,000
Interior full page: \$5,000
Interior half page: \$3,000

Profile Form Notebook (*book by Nov. 17*)
Front/back cover: \$6,000 for exclusive
Appointment sheets: \$5,000 for exclusive
Daily tab: \$2,000 (*book by Sept. 29*)

Travel Exchange Daily (*book by Nov. 17*)
Front cover (1/4 horizontal): \$7,500 for exclusive
Back cover: \$5,500
Full page: \$5,500
1/2 page: \$4,250
1/3 page: \$3,000
1/6 page: \$1,750

All sponsorships are sold on a first-come, first-served basis and are listed in \$USD.



Ready for a heart-to-heart?



Beth Engel

Account Executive/
Eastern U.S. & International
+1.859.264.6560
beth.engel@ntastaff.com



Kelley Burchell

Account Executive/
Western U.S.
+1.859.264.6557
kelley.burchell@ntastaff.com



Bond Milburn

Account Executive/
Central U.S. & Canada
+1.859.264.6568
bond.milburn@ntastaff.com

#TREX17 | NTAonline.com/convention

A groundswell of gratitude

BY KENDALL FLETCHER

I NOTICED SOMETHING beautiful in Detroit during my first-ever Tourism Cares work project. Not the sunshine on that pleasant May day, the flowers we planted nor the freshly mulched trees. It was when strangers went out of their way to say “thank you” for what we were doing.

Cheesy, I know.

But it was incredible. We received lots of gratitude from group leaders and organizers for traveling to Detroit, getting out of our comfort zones and working long hours to make places prettier, children happier and school buses artsier. But I wasn't expecting thanks from so many Detroit residents. The appreciation came in the forms of waves, smiles, horn honks and actual thank-you's all throughout the day.

About 200 volunteers spent the day gardening on Belle Isle, urban farming on Georgia Street and with the Michigan Urban Farm Initiative, enriching youth at Pasteur Elementary, painting graffiti murals and rehabbing Lafayette Park.

At my worksite in Lafayette Park, we dug up landscape stones, pulled weeds, laid compost and mulched around trees and in flower beds, and we planted lots of hydrangeas and catmint. I made some new friends over laughs while battling stubborn tree roots, tippy wheelbarrows and exceptionally heavy rocks that seemed to multiply.

Laura Kastenbauer, marketing coordinator with Mayflower Tours in Downers Grove, Illinois, was like me: relatively new to the travel industry and participating in her first Tourism Cares project.

“When it comes to being in the tourism industry and volunteering for this event, I notice a connection to places we travel to,” she said. “We go there, and we're not just leaving. You actually connect to the community. It's nice to fix up places that are forgotten and to create more places for people to enjoy.”

It was fun to learn who was new and who was seasoned in these events. Dan Flores with Maverick Aviation Group has participated in Tourism Cares projects since 2008.

“It's important and offers a great opportunity to network with industry professionals and buyers taking part in the event. There's nothing better than spending six to seven hours with someone, building a relationship,” said Flores, who served as a team leader for the group at the Georgia Street Community Collective.

Tourism Cares certainly met my expectations: meet lots of people, see a little bit of the city, work really hard and be really sore for a couple of days. Building friendships and putting faces to names while making a positive impact on an already-cool city was rewarding enough ... I didn't need to be thanked. ☺



Barry Burton with the City of Detroit discusses the design of flower beds in Lafayette Park during Tourism Cares for Detroit, May 11-12.



A group of Tourism Cares volunteers shovel compost to transfer to trees and flower beds. About 200 industry professionals from across the U.S. provided work valued at \$30,000.



Volunteers clean out a landscape bed in downtown Detroit.

7 secrets to better event marketing

BY CATHERINE HEEG



DO YOU WANT to get more people to come out to your consumer events?

Are you eager to create more buzz around your social marketing?

How about making better use of social ads to captivate your audiences?

You've come to the right page! Social marketing provides a wealth of simple ways to get your message out there. While many marketers rely solely on advertising, let's explore some under-used gems to fill your tours or events.

Easy event marketing tools

Creating buzz and building ticket sales are essential whether you're hosting a consumer event to promote your newest tour or looking to boost attendance at a concert or festival.

Facebook Events is a powerful tool that's unused by so many. By simply filling in a template, you can create a marketing tool that you can use to invite individuals and as the basis for an ad.

After clicking "Create an event" on your business page, you'll be taken to a template and can insert all the details of your upcoming event: date, time, place, ticket options and an outstanding photo to entice viewers.

Make sure you include a website that leads people to more information or a ticket purchase opportunity.



Facebook Event template example

★ Interested

✓ Going

Cover image: Remember back in the day when businesses spent time and money on window displays and posters? Your cover images are modern-day storefront windows. They are perfect (and under-utilized) tools to showcase your tours, events and festivals.

Have you changed the cover images on your social sites lately? How about changing cover images to match the themes of your social posts? You can use an editorial calendar to plan your weekly themes as part of a cohesive marketing plan, and changing your cover images is another tool in your toolbox. Here's a sample editorial calendar you can try out: bit.ly/2s1Qnah.

Email signature: Another tactic in a cohesive marketing plan that's so powerful, yet often neglected, is your email signature line. While we all include our contact info, how many times do you see a line in an email signature showcasing an upcoming event?

For example, you could write "Do you want to learn more about cruising? When you 'like' **my Facebook page**, you'll find travel tips and unique cruise destinations." And be sure to hyperlink the highlighted words to your social site.

Note: Follow this message with your standard e-signature and contact info.

Stories sell!

Are you looking for longer exposure to your Instagram and Snapchat fans? With the ephemeral style of these platforms, staying in front of your fans is easier when you use the **Stories** feature. Adding a snap to a story increases its exposure time to 24 hours, and you can get creative with combining images, text, video and filters.

Twitter, with its feature called **Moments**, offers another way of conveying a story. A moment is a roundup of tweets that mention your event or

account. You might consider promoting the top tweets of each week to showcase your upcoming event. This will provide fans with more information—and more photos to entice them.

Social ads attract

Have you seen the cool new ads on Facebook that immerse you in photos and videos? What an amazing way to show people the fun and excitement of your next event or group tour.

Canvas ads and posts let you blend still images, text, call-to-action buttons and videos into a fully immersive, mobile-only experience that's bound to attract and engage.

Carousel ads are a bit easier to create as they only feature still images and video.

Imagine the advertising possibilities for your next group tour, festival or event. When creating your Canvas or Carousel ads, try to generate a number of versions featuring different images and text. Then test each version to see which one brings you the best results. As with any type of ad, having a highly targeted audience is key to your success. Learn more about target audiences here: bit.ly/2qINuaq.

Creating buzz begins with simple tactics like these that will help you stand out in our noisy world of social marketing. Sometimes these underutilized tools can get your messages noticed and generate the most success because of their simplicity.

Which of these tactics will you use in your next marketing campaign? 📌

Catherine Heeg, international speaker and trainer, focuses on social media marketing strategies for the tourism and hospitality industry. An NTA presenter since 2009, she understands members and their businesses. Connect with her socially and at cmsspeaking.com.



REGISTER YOUR
GROUP AND RECEIVE

FREE GIFT & COUPON BOOK WORTH HUNDREDS
IN SAVINGS!

PALM BEACH
Outlets

West Palm Beach, Florida

ASHEVILLE
Outlets

Asheville, North Carolina

Outlets
of LITTLE ROCK

Little Rock, Arkansas

Outlets
of DES MOINES

Altoona, Iowa

OPENING OCTOBER 20, 2017

The new
CambridgeSide
Hot spot, new look.

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Contact us at tours@NEDevelopment.com or visit NEDTours.com for more information on any of these fabulous shopping destinations.

NEW ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT *Shopping Destinations*

COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON AND KENDALL FLETCHER

Leeuwarden and Valletta ready to shine as 2018 European capitals of culture

Since 1985, the European Union has selected cities from its member nations to serve as capitals of culture, and the two featured destinations in 2018 are Leeuwarden, Netherlands, and Valletta, Malta. The program highlights Europe's diversity by allowing lesser-known cities to showcase their rich cultures through a mix of live performances, festivals, special events, themed exhibits and other traditional activities.

Located in the northern part of the Netherlands, Leeuwarden blends the beauty of its lakes and recreational areas with the heritage of the Frisian people. In addition to showcasing the architectural wonder of its historical buildings and more than 600 national monuments, the city will put on a number of unique events detailing different aspects of local life.

The overarching tagline for Leeuwarden's 2018 programming is "Iepen Mienskip," or "Open Community," which points to the area's strong sense of interconnectedness. During the year, visitors can enjoy hundreds of cultural activities and performances based on five themes: Community and Diversity, City and Country, Nature and Culture, Royal Frisian, and Lab Leeuwarden.



CC FLICKR/FRYSKLAB: bit.ly/2umnta



CC FLICKR/FRYSKLAB: bit.ly/2qzY41

Leeuwarden's Welcome to the Village festival includes installations (top) and live music.



Valletta's Fort Saint Elmo

CC FLICKR/MARTIN FISCH: bit.ly/2sk19jw



Valletta harbor

CC FLICKR/JOHN Y. CAN: bit.ly/2XVgRT

Valletta is the capital of Malta, an island situated 50 miles south of Italy in the Mediterranean Sea. The city, which was named a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1980, features a number of fortifications and historical buildings constructed by the Order of the Knights of Saint John starting in the 1500s.

Areas such as Valletta's Strait Street, which has recently been revitalized and is now home to popular wine bars and buzzing restaurants, are just part of the city's ongoing evolution. Renowned architect Renzo Piano was involved in the design of two recent high-profile projects, the new parliament building and the opera house. As Valletta looks ahead to its year as a cultural capital, the flagship MUŻA project will bring a new visual arts center to the famous Auberge d'Italie.

To find more on Leeuwarden, go to 2018.nl or contact Corné Ruijs of NTA member Ruijs Travel at c.ruijs@ruijstravel.com. For more information on Valletta, go to valletta2018.org or contact Damon Allan of NTA member Maxima Tours/ Exclusively Malta at damon@exclusivelymalta.com. —P.H.

Motor City majesty

The Detroit Experience Factory, the site of one of the city's welcome centers, has designed a set of public tours to connect visitors to its places, projects and people. The Art & Architecture—Downtown Walking Tour leads groups through downtown buildings, many bursting with history and housing trendy restaurants, shops and residences.

"It's a wonderful tour for an introduction to Detroit's history and an easy way to learn more about our beautiful historic buildings and see some of the vibrant public art throughout downtown," says Matt Chung, Detroit Experience Factory's deputy director, who adds that Detroit is also the only U.S. city to receive UNESCO's City of Design designation.

Sites included on the two-hour tour are The Belt, the Spirit of Detroit, One Campus Martius and the Guardian Building. The latter, which is one of the most significant art deco skyscrapers in the world, was completed in 1929 and housed the Union Guardian Trust Company. Visitors step inside a



Guardian Building

KENDALL FLETCHER

kaleidoscope of colors, learn about its unique materials like the tangerine brick later marketed by the manufacturer as "Guardian brick," and check out Aztec- and Native American-inspired designs.

The Detroit Experience Factory staff can plan custom tours for groups. For more information, visit detroitexperiencefactory.org or call +1.313.962.4590. —K.F.



DICKENSCHRISTMASSHOW.COM

I'll be [in Myrtle Beach] for Christmas

When the city's not bustling with summertime tourists, Myrtle Beach is home to the dazzling Dickens Christmas Show and Festivals. Marking its 36th anniversary this year, the event features a Victorian holiday marketplace and is held at the Myrtle Beach Convention Center.

Myra Starnes, president of Leisure Time Unlimited Inc. and the event's mastermind, sought to attract groups to Myrtle Beach during the off-season. She says it's not your commonplace arts and crafts show; it's constantly changing, yet consistently unique—like an authentic Victorian marketplace.

Visitors can find an array of gourmet foods, jewelry, clothing, plants, antiques, imported gifts, crafts and décor, all while vendors and performers don Victorian-era attire. They can learn holiday traditions from around the world, talk with characters from a "A Christmas Carol" and, of course, see Santa. The event also offers a high tea and luncheon tea for groups in a Victorian holiday setting that features music and period-clad wait staff.

Holiday tours are slated each year for the show, and the 2017 tours are still in the works.

The Dickens Christmas Show and Festivals will be Nov. 9–12. The event has free bus parking as well as group discounts.

For more information, visit dickenschristmasshow.com or call +1.843.448.9483. —K.F.

Oh boy, it's St. Croix

Wisconsin's St. Croix National Scenic Riverway provides travelers with access to more than 200 miles of pristine water and thousands of acres of forested landscape. Located in the northwestern corner of the state along the Minnesota border, the National Park Service site includes both the St. Croix and Namekagon rivers.

The best way to experience the park is to get out on the water, and the best options are kayaking, fishing and paddling tours. Ranger-led programs, including guided paddles, take place at the visitors centers in the cities of St. Croix Falls and Trego.

Another popular activity is bird watching. The area is home to more than 250 species, ranging from bald eagles and red-billed hawks to Baltimore orioles and blue herons. Hiking trails or paddling routes offer the best access to viewing areas, depending on what birds visitors want to see.

In the winter, many of the park's trails double as paths for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

To learn more, call +1.715.483.2274 or go to nps.gov/sacn. —P.H. 📍



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Deep in the heart of Texas

Mark Twain has been quoted (perhaps apocryphally) as saying that San Antonio, Texas, is one of only four unique cities in America. While Twain's tendency toward tall tales and hyperbole might have gotten the best of him on that declaration—*only* four unique cities?—his point still stands: San Antonio is the product of a rich history that connects native, Spanish and American influences.

Travel Exchange '17 will take place in San Antonio, Dec. 14-18. This marks the return of NTA's annual convention to the fourth quarter. On the following pages, you'll find out some of what's in store for the event and read about some of the city's compelling attractions.

Delegates who attended Travel Exchange '17 in St. Louis have until July 14 to sign up and save 50 percent on their registration fees for San Antonio, and those weren't in St. Louis have until that date to receive an early-bird discount.

At NTA Headquarters, we might slip and call San Antonio the *second* Travel Exchange '17. "So nice, we did it twice," might even have been printed in the pages of this magazine. But it's hardly fair to cast this event as a repeat with a host city that is this, well, *unique*.



VISIT SAN ANTONIO

See what's in store (and there's plenty more to come)

NTA's annual convention gets members out of the convention center and into local restaurants and attractions for dine-around nights and parties. Here are just three of the events we have planned at top venues in San Antonio:



WITTE MUSEUM

Thursday night's icebreaker, sponsored by Visit San Antonio, is at the **Witte Museum**. Founded in 1926, the museum boasts a collection that focuses on natural history, science and how those disciplines intersect with South Texas culture. The museum recently underwent a massive renovation and expansion of its exhibit spaces following a campaign to raise \$100 million to improve the 10-acre campus. The Witte's new main building opened in March.



VISIT SAN ANTONIO

The **LDR & Grotto** will provide the setting for Friday night's reception. The LDR ballroom at the Henry Gonzales Convention Center combines design elements from the Old West with contemporary styling, complete with antler chandeliers and custom-built furniture. The Grotto opens directly onto the San Antonio River Walk, and the space brings serenity to the city with its foliage, trees and waterfall.



VISIT SAN ANTONIO

Monday's closing night party at **Six Flags Fiesta Texas** will bring some holiday spirit to Travel Exchange. The park will be decorated with thousands of Christmas lights, and attendees will enjoy a special performance of the attraction's popular holiday show, "The Majesty of Christmas," in the Zaragoza Theater. The show brings to life the biblical story of the Nativity, with live animals, flying angels and vocal performances.



Mission San Jose

A trio grande

San Antonio embraces its vibrant history, and the city's heritage sites, traditional festivals and contemporary developments celebrate the many origin points of San Antonians.

San Antonio River Walk This star attraction allows visitors and locals alike to stroll along the flagstone paths that flank the San Antonio River. The scenery ranges from parklike and serene to the bustle of bars, boutiques, restaurants and high-rises. Open-air boats are an excellent way for groups to get a tour of the city, or they can enjoy a meal as they drift down the river.

San Antonio Missions Five Spanish frontier missions in and near San Antonio were added to the list of UNESCO World Heritage sites in 2015. The structures date back to the 18th century, when Franciscan missionaries evangelized in the area while Spain defended the northern reaches of its North American territory. The missions' builders combined elements of indigenous and Old World design, and the structures are preserved by the U.S. National Park Service, the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the State of Texas.

Fiesta de las Luminarias This annual festival, which takes place on the first three weekends in December, transforms the San Antonio River Walk with thousands of paper lanterns. The softly glowing lights create a symbolic path for the Holy Family leading up to Christmas. Another holiday highlight is boat caroling, when local choral groups board boats and sing as they cruise along the 2.5-mile River Walk.



Dinner on a river barge

VISIT SAN ANTONIO



Market Square

CC FLICKR/MOMMYMUSINGS: bit.ly/zrF9yB

Shops, squares, authentic wares

San Antonio's neighborhoods are teeming with sprawling markets, funky boutiques and fine art galleries where travelers can find souvenirs and a bite to eat while taking in the local culture. Here are three shopping hot spots:

Market Square is San Antonio's largest Mexican market, and visitors can shop for art, textiles, ceramics and jewelry made by local craftspeople or imported. The three-block market encompasses more than 100 shops and stalls, and live performances and working artists add to the vibrant atmosphere. Visitors should save room for dessert, too, since sweet bread and cinnamon-infused hot chocolate from the market's food vendors are favorites.

La Villita was established nearly 300 years ago, and it is one of San Antonio's oldest neighborhoods. In 1939 it became La Villita Historic Arts Village. Today, the neighborhood offers visitors the opportunity to browse more than 30 shops and galleries run by artists from San Antonio and the surrounding area. Wares on display range from copper objects and sculptures to painting and folk art, and nearby restaurants serve savory, authentic Mexican and steakhouse staples.

Alamo Heights is an upscale neighborhood known for fashionable boutiques. The Alley on Bitters features an eclectic collection of crafts shops and antique dealers and is built on the site of an 1800s dairy farm. Alamo Heights is also near the Witte Museum and Brackenridge Park, with 343 acres that include a tea garden, birding, walking trails and picnic areas.




La Villita

VISIT SAN ANTONIO



Brackenridge Park

CC FLICKR/KAREN: bit.ly/zsGyeh

For more on these and other San Antonio attractions, go to visitsanantonio.com. To learn more about Travel Exchange, visit NTAonline.com/convention, or turn to page 16 to find out more about what the association has planned for its December convention. 

Join us in thanking our Travel Exchange '17 sponsors!

so far

Platinum



Best Western Hotels & Resorts
Registration Bags



Broadway Inbound
NYC Center Stage Luncheon



Mexico Tourism Board
Friday Luncheon & Fiesta



Norwegian Cruise Line
Friday Luncheon & Fiesta



NYC & Company
NYC Center Stage Luncheon



Six Flags Fiesta Texas
Final Night Party



The Soundtrack of America.
Made in Tennessee.
Saturday Luncheon



Visit Clarksville
Opening Ceremony Sponsor
& Government Relations
Breakfast Bistro Co-Sponsor



Visit San Antonio
Host Destination & Icebreaker

Gold



Explore Charleston
Sunday Luncheon



Hard Rock Cafe International
Tourism Rocks



Hilmar Cheese Company
Visitor Center
Happy Hour: Cheese Sponsor



Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority
Tourism Rocks



Margaritaville San Antonio
Opening Night VIP Pre-party



Visit California
Café California



Voxnetwork USA
Travel Exchange Headsets

Silver



Aon Affinity
Happy Hour Co-sponsor



Atlantic Tours Ltd & Nova Scotia Tourism
Luggage Tags



Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc.
Cracker Barrel Lounge



Courier magazine
Saturday Luncheon,
Distinguished Dozen Awards



Deadwood Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau
Travel Exchange On-site Guide



Delta Air Lines, Inc.
Official NTA Airline Partner,
Delta Sky Lounge &
China Market Sessions



Historic Temple Square
Refreshments



OUE Skyspace LA
Name Badges & Water Bottles



Premier Travel Media
Media Sponsor



Sports Leisure Vacations
Board of Directors / Past
Presidents / Past Chair Reception



Team Texas
Refreshments: Soft Drinks



Tour Colorado
Refreshments



Travel Oregon
Refreshments & Travel
Exchange On-site Guide



Travel Portland
Refreshments & Travel
Exchange On-site Guide



Bronze
**American Revolution
Museum at Yorktown and
Jamestown Settlement**
Tour Operator Table Gift



**Campbell County
Convention &
Visitors Bureau**
Profile Form Notebook



Ed-Ventures, Inc.
FTA Breakfast & Travel
Exchange Daily



The Group Tour Company
Government Relations
Breakfast Bistro



Newseum
Travel Exchange Daily



Ocean City, MD CVB
Profile Form Notebook &
Travel Exchange Daily



Sports Travel & Tours
Owners Network Reception



VISIT Milwaukee
Travel Exchange Daily

Ready to be part of this list?



Beth Engel
Advertising & Sponsorship,
Eastern U.S. & International
+1.859.264.6560
beth.engel@ntastaff.com



Kelley Burchell
Advertising & Sponsorship,
Western U.S.
+1.859.264.6557
kelley.burchell@ntastaff.com



Bond Milburn
Advertising & Sponsorship,
Central U.S. & Canada
+1.859.264.6568
bond.milburn@ntastaff.com



Hat exhibit at the Kentucky Derby Museum

CITY SPOTLIGHT

Louisville: Out of the backstretch, taking the lead

BY GABE WEBB

IN THE EARLY 1830s, French writer Alexis de Tocqueville was bound for Louisville, Kentucky, from Cincinnati, Ohio, when his trip hit a snag. The roads, he wrote, were “abominable,” so he opted for a steamboat down the Ohio River, which got stuck in the icy winter waters. The passengers were sent ashore 25 miles from their destination and left to their own devices. They banded together, and thanks to “the good shoulder shoves and daring spirit,” of his fellow travelers, de Tocqueville made it to Louisville.

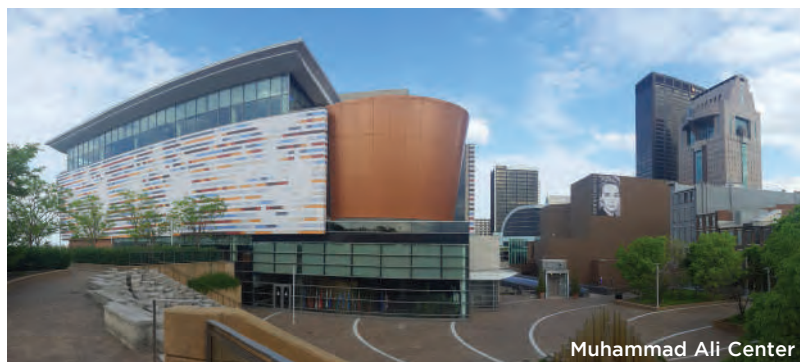
In the 180 years since then, the roads have definitely improved, and thank goodness, because Louisville is a city worth visiting. When I toured there in late April at the invitation of the Louisville CVB, I found a walkable downtown packed with attractions that represented the old, new and constantly refreshing character of the city.

“We have so many iconic attractions to offer within a few blocks, located right downtown on Main Street,” says Sandra

Robertson, tourism sales manager for the Louisville CVB.

Robertson also pointed out the CVB’s many incentives for group tour operators.

“The Loving Louisville



Muhammad Ali Center

Loyalty Club celebrates our customers who have repeatedly brought groups to Louisville either for day or overnight trips.”

Incentives include a \$500 shopping spree in the Louisville visitors center or \$250 cash for operators who consistently book 15 rooms or more. Robertson’s organization also takes steps to make tour groups feel welcome.

“We can assist with hotel needs, itineraries, welcome gifts and much more. We have the inside information, so [operators] will be sure they have the best experience bringing a group to our city,” she says.

And while I can’t speak to the city’s “good shoulder shoves”—my wagon never got stuck in the snow—there was certainly a bit of that daring spirit.

For more information, contact Sandra Robertson at srobertson@gotolouisville.com or visit gotolouisville.com.



Evan Williams Bourbon Experience

I arrived in Louisville late in the afternoon and immediately headed to the Evan Williams Bourbon Experience in the heart of downtown. I joined a few other whiskey aficionados on the Traditional Tour & Tasting, a one-hour crash course in the history of bourbon in Louisville, the biography of Evan Williams and the nuances in distilling the spirit.

Our knowledgeable guide led us through elaborate re-creations of historical settings: the banks of the Ohio River in the late 1700s, the streets of Prohibition-era Louisville and a mid-century cocktail club straight from a scene in “Mad Men.” At each stop, we watched brief film clips to supplement the context our guide provided.

Very little bourbon is produced on-site, but the tour does take groups by the large room where vats of corn mash are distilled and barrelled before the wooden casks are taken away to age. The tour concluded with tips for novice whiskey drinkers as we sipped the distillery’s products, which include both budget and premium products.

The Bourbon Experience offers room rentals for groups, including period settings and more contemporary spaces, and catered meals can be arranged.

After imbibing, my next stop was the Muhammad Ali Center. For all the intensity that a prize fight might evoke, the setting of the museum was peaceful, inviting and thought-provoking—much like its namesake, I would learn.

After watching “If You Can Dream,” a 14-minute introductory film about the life of Ali, I walked through the museum’s permanent exhibits.

The Core Principles galleries explored the guiding philosophy of Ali’s life: confidence, conviction, dedication, giving, respect and spirituality. At video booths, guests can sit and record messages about what these principles mean to them.

Train with Ali took me through the boxer’s regimen of mental and physical exercise in preparation for fights. I tried my hand at punching the speed bag and shadow boxing before deciding that I was fine floating like a butterfly and would leave the “sting like a bee” business to the professionals.

Other galleries contain memorabilia from Ali’s career, and interactive displays supplement biographical information with historical context. Together, these pieces form a fascinating look at Ali’s youth, athleticism, conversion to Islam and growth as an activist for peace against the backdrop of the civil rights era and the Vietnam War.

Groups should make reservations at least three weeks in advance, and special pricing is available. The museum offers easy motorcoach drop off, and free bus parking is available close by. Fans might also check out the Muhammad

Ali Childhood Home and Museum, open Thursdays through Sundays.

The next day at sunrise, I met Jennifer Riddell, group tour manager for the Kentucky Derby Museum. The museum entrance is adjacent to the gates of Churchill Downs, where the famous race is held, and Riddell took me through what a group would experience during the attraction’s Backstretch Breakfast Tour.

While we ate a hot meal in the Track Kitchen, we watched horses run by during their morning workouts. The Derby was less than three weeks away, so the barns and stables were bustling.

“In the spring and fall, we focus on live racing,” says Riddell, but tour groups have options throughout the year. “In the winter, we have beautiful Christmas decor and activities like creating ornaments from horseshoes. Groups can visit in the spring and again during the holidays for a completely different experience.”

Other options include a mock race day with archival footage—following a presentation by a professional handicapper and wagering—a make-your-own-hat session, a curator’s tour of museum treasures not on display and a jockey appearance.

After photo ops on the backstretch and from the stands below the famous twin spires, I headed inside the museum for its 360-degree film, “The Greatest Race,” and a walk through the exhibits. Artifacts cover every aspect of the Kentucky Derby, from the fashions of its famous attendees to the history of horseracing.



Muhammad Ali Center

GABE WEBB

"With 143 years under our belts, the Kentucky Derby is the most well-known event in horse racing, and there is nowhere else in the country guests can visit and celebrate it," says Riddell. "Most guests have at least one Derby story, and many have an emotional connection."

After making my way downtown, I stopped by the Frazier History Museum.

Two weeks prior, the museum opened a traveling exhibition dedicated to the world of "The Hunger Games" books and films. Costumes, props and concept drawings from the films' production design teams were juxtaposed with historical images that inspired their creations, and topics covered included fashion, architecture, weaponry and survival skills.

I also visited the current exhibition "Spirits of the Bluegrass: Prohibition and Kentucky." Using everything from pamphlets belonging to temperance advocates to the prescriptions for alcohol, the exhibit took an in-depth look at the social movements that gave rise to



GABE WEBB

Prohibition, and the methods bootleggers and corrupt law enforcement officials used to circumvent it.

Tour groups can arrange for appearances by costumed interpreters, guided visits and dining options.

At dinnertime, I met up with Susan Dallas, the senior marketing communications manager for the Louisville

CVB. She took me across the river to Clarksville, Indiana, for a meal and show at the NTA-member Derby Dinner Playhouse. We were joined by Cindy Nevitt, group travel director for the playhouse, and Luanne Mattson, director of communications for the Southern Indiana, Clark-Floyd Counties CTB.

"Our region is in the sweet spot," says Mattson. "We're not too big of a city, and

Southern Indiana is Home to the Region's Largest Dinner Theater...Derby Dinner Playhouse.

OFF BROADWAY...ON SALE.



WELCOME TO ENTERTAINING SOUTHERN INDIANA. From award-winning live performances at our renowned Derby Dinner Playhouse - to a calendar full of outdoor concerts - there's entertainment gear-round in Southern Indiana. All just a bridge away from Louisville and Bourbon Country. Don't miss the entertaining charm of Clark and Floyd Counties. With a variety of lodging choices, and one of the lowest bed taxes in the area, it's nothing but sweet dreams. Book today!

Contact Kate Bewley at our Southern Indiana Tourism Bureau at 812-282-6654 or Kate@GoSolN.com or Cindy Nevitt at Derby Dinner Playhouse at 877-898-8577 or groups@derbydinner.com



CLARKSVILLE • JEFFERSONVILLE • NEW ALBANY



GoSolN.com • (812) 282-6654



Schipff's Confectionery



"The Hunger Games: The Exhibition" at the Frazier History Museum

GABE WEBB



Kentucky Science Center

KENTUCKY SCIENCE CENTER

we're not too rural. Southern Indiana complements Louisville well because it offers accessible, walkable downtowns that have unique shops and experiences."

One experience she says is ideal for groups is a tour of Schimpff's Confectionery in Jeffersonville. Guests tour the candy-making facility and watch as the company's signature cinnamon red-hot drops and other sweets are made.

"Some of the equipment is the same that was used in the 1890s when 'Grandfather' Gustav Schimpff first started making candies," says Mattson. "Over the years, [current owners] Jill and Warren Schimpff have collected candy memorabilia and equipment, and their wry sense of humor gives the crowd lots of great memories."

Our evening's entertainment was a performance of the musical "Sister Act," which began after a buffet dinner of comfort food staples. The stage is a theater-in-the-round setup, and the nuns delighted the audience, which included large groups of seniors and Illinois high school students.

Special pricing is available for groups of 20 or more, and tickets range from \$39 for a weeknight to \$44 for a Saturday evening performance. The 2017-18 season is underway, and upcoming shows include "The Music Man," "A Christmas Carol," "Mamma Mia!" and "Oklahoma!"

To learn more about group visits to the Derby Dinner Playhouse, contact Nevitt at cnevitt@derbydinner.com or go to derbydinner.com. For more on Southern Indiana attractions, contact Mattson at luanne@gosoin.com or visit gosoin.com.

Before bidding adieu to Louisville, I made one final stop the next morning. (OK, two stops. I got donuts.) I visited the Kentucky Science Center, and Lisa Resnik, director of external affairs, showed me this museum designed with engagement in mind.

"The Science Center's ever-evolving array of hand-on activities, exhibits and movies easily make it a full-day experience for children and families," says

Resnik. The museum is a truly dynamic experience for young visitors, as activities and displays get them moving, tinkering, designing and testing.

The exhibits also connect visitors with their immediate surroundings. On our tour, Resnik showed me an engineering display that put me in control of assembling and testing models of two new bridges that recently opened over the Ohio. The museum also has compelling offerings for older students and adults.

"One of the most popular programs for high school students is Pulse of Surgery," she says. "Students can view a live, open-heart surgery [via video feed] and interact with the surgeon, anesthesiologist, head nurse and others through a question-and-answer dialogue."

Pulse of Surgery is typically held two or three times each month, and other classes are available, including labs on energy and motion, and pig or shark dissections.

Go to kysciencecenter.org or call +1.502.561.7166 for a complete schedule of surgery viewings and other programs. ☛



CC FLICKR/BARTAST: bit.ly/MVH19

Sleek architecture, sleek automobile: BMW World in Munich is one of many automobile museums included on Appina Travel's Automobile Industry of South Germany tour. To learn more about the company's themed itineraries across Germany, turn to page 42.

South Central U.S.	34
Pacific Northwest	38
Germany and Switzerland	42
India	43

South Central U.S. COMPILED BY BOB ROUSE

Small towns loom large in Tennessee



Downtown Jonesborough



Open mic night in Leiper's Fork



Discovery Park of America, Union City

A small-town girl herself, Amanda Stravinsky has always loved the warmth of smaller communities. And as a PR and media specialist for the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development, she's especially familiar with—and partial to—Tennessee's small towns.

"With the Discover Tennessee Trails & Byways program, the state makes it easy to explore towns after you've had big-city fun," Stravinsky says. "If you're looking for laid back, authentic hospitality, our small towns fit the bill."

Let's look at that bill from east to west.

- In Jonesborough, "Tennessee's Oldest Town," Appalachian culture is preserved at the Chester Inn Museum and the Washington County/Jonesborough History Museum. It's also displayed on walking tours conducted by locals who have a passion for yesteryear. And Jonesborough hosts the acclaimed National Storytelling Festival, set this year for Oct. 6-8.
- Townsend, nestled near Great Smoky Mountains National Park, invites visitors to relax at a beautifully appointed log cabin, take a leisurely ride through historical Cades Cove and dine at Dancing Bear Lodge. "And be sure to check out the Bush Brothers Visitors Center," Stravinsky says. "It's across the road from the Bush Beans manufacturing facility."
- Cookeville is home to hundreds of options: restaurants, golf courses, train excursions, antique stores and brand-name shops. Located near Cummins Falls State Park, Fall Creek Falls State Park and Golden Mountain State Park, it offers a number of nature walks.
- NTA-member Rutherford County is home to Murfreesboro, which, although not a small town, has an area that harkens back to a small-town past. Cannonsburgh Village, located near the county courthouse, showcases 125 years of history with a gristmill, one-room schoolhouse, museum and an operating blacksmith's shop. Your Rutherford County contact is Donna Klempnow, dklempnow@rutherfordchamber.com.
- "Leiper's Fork is as laid back as it gets," Stravinsky says. "The come-as-you-are town serves up local art, antique shopping and home-cooked meals with a side of sincere Tennessee hospitality." Visitors can browse galleries like The Copper Fox and David Arms, peruse boutique shops filled with unique items and take a long sip of whiskey at the new Leiper's Fork Distillery.
- Milky Way Farm, near the town of Pulaski, has more than 1,000 acres featuring deer, wild turkeys, barns, trails and vistas. Visitors can view one of the largest magnolia plantations in the South, tour the manor house and dine at a giant table that can seat 40 for a catered dinner.
- Discovery Park of America rises in the small town of Union City. An eye-opening attraction, the park features Starship Theater, an interactive motion simulator; a 48-foot human-formed slide; solar-powered airplanes; and a 20,000-gallon aquarium.
- Visitors might go to Paris, Tennessee, to sample some of the 26 wines made at Paris Winery or view a sunset at Paris Landing State Park. But they're sure to stay for a photo at the town's 70-foot Eiffel Tower replica in Memorial Park.

For more information about Tennessee towns—small and large—contact Brian Wagner with the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development at brian.wagner@tn.gov or go to tnvacation.com.

No shortage of suggestions for Chattanooga

Shelda Rees, director of tourism for the Chattanooga CVB, is always eager to brag about her city. And this year, she's made two additions to her tout list: a guitar museum and a trolley tour.

Songbirds Guitar Museum, which opened in March in the historical Chattanooga Choo Choo Complex, has the largest private collection of guitars in the world. Groups see a short video and then tour exhibits showcasing guitars dating from the invention of the electric guitar in 1950 to around 1980. "Tour operators can add a VIP tour that includes the Green Room and Vault," Rees says. "They can also have a catered dinner at the Choo Choo and then enjoy a singer-songwriter performance in the museum."

The Chattanooga Choo Choo also is the starting point for the Gray Line Sightseeing Trolley Tour, which provides a narrated talk and 10 stops, including the Bluff View Art District, NorthShore Historic District and Lookout Mountain Incline Railway.

Rees also has suggestions for the best time to visit the Tennessee Aquarium (after 3 p.m.) and how to efficiently visit the attractions on Lookout Mountain. (Start early at Ruby Falls and have the motorcoach meet the group at the top of the incline railway.)

Her tips help make tours successful for John Tribble, CTP, president of Good News Travels. "We appreciate the assistance and personal touch we receive from Shelda and her staff,"



CHATTANOOGA CVB

The recently opened Songbirds Guitar Museum features the world's largest private collection of guitars.

Tribble says. "We offer both student and adult programs to Chattanooga, and the variety of attractions, food, entertainment and lodging makes this an easy sell for us."

To get suggestions yourself, including how to get free Chattanooga Bakery MoonPies for your group, contact Rees at ssrees@chattanoogaacvb.com or visit chattanoogafun.com.



WELCOME TO A PLACE THAT
MAKES MORE MEMORIES.

Bring your group to a place that creates ear-to-ear smiles. A destination with more shows, more arts and crafts, more shopping, more exciting attractions, and more mountain views. A town filled with fun for everyone, every age. Welcome to a detour from the ordinary.

PIGEONFORGETOURS.COM • 1-800-285-7557





"The Stephen Foster Story," a Broadway-style musical performed at My Old Kentucky Home State Park, will celebrate its 60th season next year.



Bardstown's six bourbon distilleries, each offering tours and tastings, will be joined by two craft distilleries opening in the next nine months.

VISIT BARDSTOWN

Bardstown, it's an honor

It's possible that Dawn Przystal will tire of seeing Bardstown, Kentucky, in the news. As the tourism director for Visit Bardstown, she must have seen all the articles about her town being recognized by *Travel + Leisure*, *Fodor's Travel*, AARP, Expedia and others with a collection of superlatives: most beautiful, favorite, best, most interesting, etc.

It's also possible that she doesn't tire of the acclaim. Maybe she's too busy.

"Located at the trailhead of the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, Bardstown is the Bourbon Capital of the World, and in the next year we will see three new distillery visitor experiences added to the current six in the area," Przystal says. "Two new craft distilleries, Preservation Distillery and Bardstown Bourbon Company, will begin welcoming guests this year, and Lux Row Distillery will open to the public in the spring of 2018."

Several of Bardstown's existing distilleries are expanding or offering new experiences. Heaven Hill Distilleries Bourbon Heritage Center now hosts a Bottled in Bond tour, and Willett Distillery just expanded its visitor center and added larger tasting rooms and event space.

Bardstown is not all about the bourbon, though.

Next summer "The Stephen Foster Story," the outdoor, Broadway-style musical performed at My Old Kentucky Home State Park, will celebrate its 60th season. And the park is already offering new options for groups, including culinary and mint julep tours. Another addition of note: All the guides sing.

Throughout the year, visitors enjoy Bardstown's history and rails. "One of our hidden gems is the acclaimed Civil War Museum of the Western Theatre; it's the fourth-largest Civil War museum in the country," Przystal says. "And our two trains are still favorites of our groups. My Old Kentucky Dinner Train and the Kentucky Railway Museum offer regular excursions, as well as specialty trains."

Bardstown draws holiday groups, too. "Christmas is an especially beautiful time to visit. Our Christmas Round Bardstown features more than 20 events in the six-week holiday season," Przystal says, adding that a pre-holiday Bardstown visit pairs well with a trip to The Outlet Shoppes

of the Bluegrass in nearby Simpsonville. "This gives you the best of both shopping worlds: boutiques and locally made items in a charming downtown as well as high-end stores at an outlet."

Bardstown also has a strong faith component. Founded in 1780, the city is rich in religious heritage. Attractions include the Basilica of St. Joseph Pro-Cathedral, the first Catholic cathedral west of the Allegheny Mountains, and the Abbey of Gethsemani.

For more information about Bardstown, go to visitbardstown.com or email Przystal at dawn@bardstowntourism.com.

VISIT GRACELAND[®] IN MEMPHIS

Featuring an
All-New, Immersive
Entertainment
Experience

Elvis Presley's
MEMPHIS
— at Graceland —

GRACELAND.COM/GROUPS • 800-238-2010

© EPE, Graceland and its marks are trademarks of EPE. All Rights Reserved. Elvis Presley™ © 2017 ABG EPE IP LLC



GROUP
RATES
AVAILABLE

Arts, crafts, music ... and bacon

Located beside Beckley on Interstate 64 in the Appalachian Mountains of West Virginia, Tamarack is the nation's first retail showcase for West Virginia handmade goods and art. The facility, with its striking, peaked red roof and attractive grounds, opened in 1996 and added a conference center in 2001. It was another addition, though, that led to a change of operations at Tamarack.

"We added an all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet, and it has been really popular," says Norma Accord, marketing manager. "We had been limiting our hours during the winter because of reduced visitation, but this past winter we maintained regular hours to accommodate the breakfast crowd."


After guests have sampled farm-fresh eggs, bacon, pan-fried trout and biscuits and gravy (for about \$10), they can browse through Tamarack's artisan-made specialty items: jewelry, pottery, furniture, outdoor décor, musical instruments, foods and candies, and a variety of fine art and crafts. Groups can also tap toes to live music and visit art galleries, including an open-air exhibit space.

Tamarack offers additional reasons to visit. A dinner theater series runs from late June to mid-October, and this year's schedule includes "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" and "King Lear."

And when the breakfast buffet nourishment is long gone, groups can think about food again in connection with Tamarack's Culinary Dinner Series. This summer's once-a-month evening

events focus on wine pairings (July), farm-to-table (August) and New Orleans-style seafood (September).

New this year is Hands-on Tamarack, a program of intimate instruction in the arts, with classes ranging from woodworking and jewelry making to pottery and culinary arts. The sessions are taught in on-site studios that were renovated to accommodate instruction.

For more information about Tamarack, visit tamarackwv.com or email Kathy Murray, sales manager, at kmurray@tamarackwv.com. 



TAMARACK

Retail products made by local artisans include apparel, furniture, crafts and fine art.



Chattanooga is nestled along the banks of the Tennessee River and surrounded by scenic beauty, including historic Lookout Mountain. We are easy to find just off of I-75, I-24 and I-59. Your groups can explore our revitalized riverfront, world-famous attractions, rich history, great restaurants bursting with local flavors. **Spend at least one night and your adult groups get FREE MoonPies, just give us a call. See you in Chattanooga ... this year!*

CHATTANOOGA
BEST TOWN EVER

ChattanoogaFun.com
ssrees@chattanoogaacvb.com
423/756-8687 x 3039

Pacific Northwest

COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON

British Columbia's Green Lake

Outdoor adventure, First Nations sites dot B.C.'s Cariboo Chilcotin Coast region

The Cariboo Chilcotin Coast region of central British Columbia is a land of breathtaking beauty, ruggedness, diverse wildlife and outdoor adventure. This vast area stretches from the Rocky and Cariboo mountains in the east to the Great Bear Rainforest out west along the Pacific Coast.

According to Beverly Evans of the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association, visitors can explore each of the three sections that make up the region's name: the lush Cariboo where trails and wildlife abound, the peaks and plateaus of the Chilcotin and the fjords and forests of the Coast.

She says a range of on-the-water experiences are available from local

outfitters, including Cariboo Chilcotin Jet Boat Adventures and KUMSHEEN River Rafting Resort. Some of CCJBA's top tours include the hour-long Scenic Flat Rock Canyon River Tour, the eight-hour Wild Bighorn Sheep Range Safari and the six-hour Gold Rush Explorer, which includes an interactive gold-panning program.

Groups can choose between three- and seven-hour journeys with KUMSHEEN. The half-day Devil's Gorge Run tour goes through 18 rapids along the Thompson River. The company's full-day trips include the popular Legendary Thompson River tour; the Power-Paddle Combo, also on the Thompson; and the thrill-seeker's favorite, the Fraser River & Hells Gate excursion.

The region also is home to a number of First Nations sites that offer a look at its many tribes. During a visit to the Xatsúll Heritage Village, travelers can enjoy daily programs and take part in workshops with elders that detail the community's spiritual, cultural and traditional way of life.

Nestled in beautiful Fraser Canyon, Tuckkwiowhum Village offers an



TUCKKWIOWHUM VILLAGE

immersive look at the Nlaka'pamux First Nations culture. In addition to taking guided tours, groups can see handmade jewelry, traditional clothing, native crafts, decorative carvings and more in the museum and gift shop.

Evans also says tours related to the area's Gold Rush history are popular. Two sites offering a look at the wild and wooly days in the 1850s, when gold was discovered along the Fraser River, are Hat Creek Ranch and Barkerville Historic Town and Park.

To learn more, contact Evans at beverly@landwithoutlimits.com or visit landwithoutlimits.com.



KUMSHEEN.COM

Capitalize on the bounty of the Olympia region

Located an hour south of Seattle on Washington's Budd Inlet, Olympia is one of America's most scenic state capitals. According to Jeff Bowe, director of sales for the Olympia Lacey Tumwater VCB, the city is more than just a governmental hub, though.

"We like to describe the Olympia region as more than just Washington State's capital; it's also a place for 'handcrafted escapes' featuring local beers, wines and spirits," he says. "We take much pride in helping our NTA partners to understand what we have and what differentiates us from other destinations."

Bowe says one of the things his organization is promoting is the Thurston Bountiful Byway. This 60-mile route takes travelers to small towns where they can visit farms, hit local markets that offer seasonal produce and attend agriculture-themed events. Along the way, they also can try some of the area's craft beer, wine and spirits.

"You see the words 'scenic byway' everywhere, but how often can you pull off the highway and sip fresh apple cider made from Washington State apples, feed a goat, experience the sweet fragrance of lavender while sipping lemonade or sit down to dinner on a working organic farm while soaking in the sunset? We do it every day in the Olympia region," says Bowe.

The culinary highlights don't end with the Bountiful Byway, though. "We are also rolling out a coffee trail, featuring local coffee roasters," says Bowe. "Visitors can learn the story behind the carefully chosen coffee beans—and the families that lovingly care for them—as well as sampling different roasts."

Natural attractions also are a draw to the Olympia area, which has miles of beautiful shoreline, rocky beaches, and diverse flora and fauna. "People can experience [nature] at their own pace, whether that means strolling through the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, feeling rejuvenated by the mist of Tumwater Falls or exploring mysterious Mima Mounds," adds Bowe.

For more information, contact Bowe at jeff@experienceolympia.com or go to experienceolympia.com.



Three Magnets Brewing Co.



Olympia Farmers Market



INGRID BARRENTINE

Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge

The best of Baker County

“Baker City’s award-winning historical downtown is always a favorite stop for groups visiting eastern Oregon,” says Timothy Bishop, marketing director for Baker County Tourism. “We have over 100 buildings on the National Register of Historic Places, making the downtown walking tour a great way to explore the region’s rich history. Or for those operators looking for a shopping break in their itinerary, the city is full of quaint locally owned shops and art galleries.”

Beyond those options, Bishop recommends the following three things for groups visiting his area.



Take Your Tour Somewhere Unexpected.

Discover Southern Oregon and experience one of the top travel destinations in the world, while staying in comfort at the retro-modern Ashland Hills Hotel. Sip wine from the oldest wine region in Oregon, take in breathtaking views of Crater Lake, enjoy world-renowned theatre at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and taste the region’s bounty at our on-site restaurant while lounging by the pool.

BOOK NOW
855.482.8310
AshlandHillsHotel.com

ASHLAND HILLS
Hotel & Suites

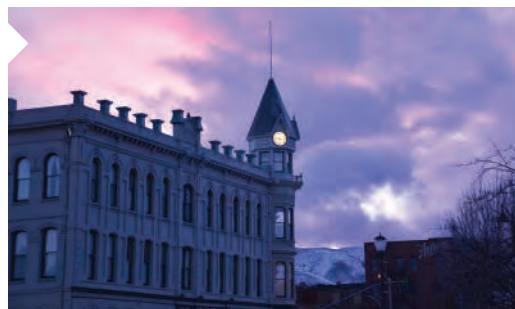


Barley Brown’s Brew Pub Oregon is well known as a destination for craft beer, and Barley Brown’s is one of the state’s most awarded craft breweries—having won more than 90 U.S. and international awards for its beers. The brewery offers guided group tours, and travelers can sample from the more than 25 varieties on tap or enjoy a smaller selection over dinner at the adjacent brewpub.

The Geiser Grand Hotel

Bishop says whether groups spend the night, visit as part of the Step Back in Time tour or enjoy dinner under the stained-glass ceiling in its Palm Court, this beautifully restored historical Victorian hotel is a must-see.

Taste of Baker City Held the first full weekend in October, this event is perfect for groups wanting to explore the local culinary scene. Restaurants from throughout the region set up on the downtown sidewalks and offer bite-size samples of their finest dishes. Taste of Baker City always coincides with the First Friday Art Walk and the Baker Artists Studio Tour, which also take place in the downtown area.



For more information, contact Bishop at info@basecampbaker.com or visit basecampbaker.com.

Explore Oregon's most renowned orchards

Since its humble beginnings in 1934 on 240 acres in central Oregon, Harry & David has expanded to become one of the world's best-known gourmet gift brands. Groups heading to the Medford headquarters can learn more about the company's history and sample some of its signature products.

"Harry & David offers visitors a true Pacific Northwest experience by showcasing our Oregon roots," says Kay Armstrong, who has been a tour guide at the attraction for more than 25 years. "From our extensive acreage of orchards nestled in the Rogue Valley to our baking and confections production facilities, it is exciting for groups to see how we have handcrafted quality fruit and gourmet food gifts since 1984."

The hour-long guided factory tour takes travelers to the bakery and candy kitchens where the culinary team creates silky-smooth chocolate truffles, creamy cheesecakes, baklava and much more. Visitors also can watch as employees select and sort the company's exclusive Royal Riviera Pears and assemble towering gift baskets during a stop in the packing facilities.

Armstrong recommends that groups leave plenty of time before or after the tour to explore the Harry & David Country Village Store, where they can enjoy a wide variety of tastings that include everything from Moose Munch to salsas to Oregon-made wine.

To learn more, contact Jody Power, Harry & David's marketing manager, at jpower@harryanddavid.com or visit harryanddavid.com/h/view/tours.



TRAVEL MEDFORD



HARRY & DAVID

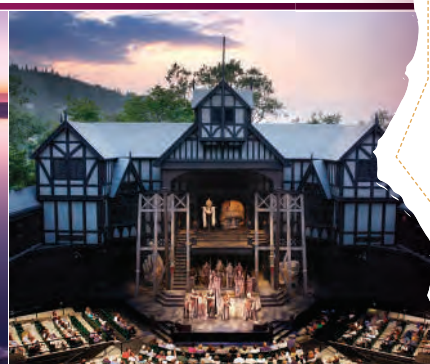
Named a Top 12 Global Wine Region to Visit, *Forbes*, 2017



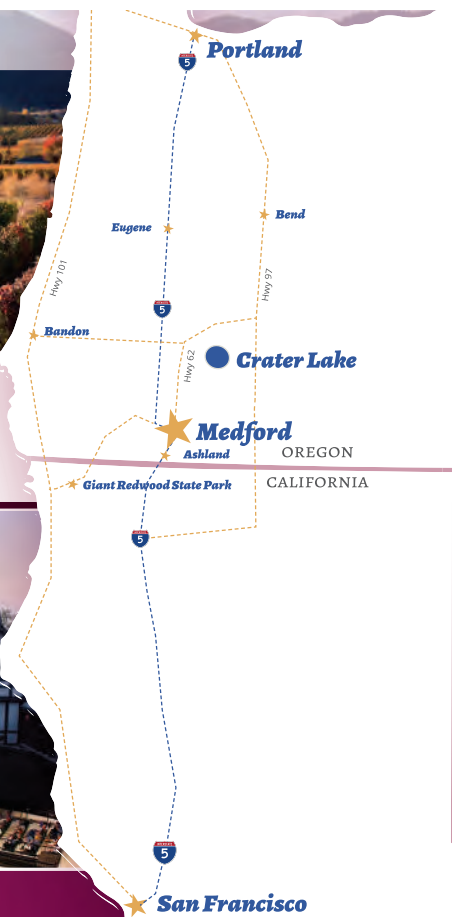
GREAT PERFORMANCES DAILY
Medford
AND THE ROGUE VALLEY



From
World Class Wines
to
Tony Awards
From
National Parks
to
Breathtaking Adventure

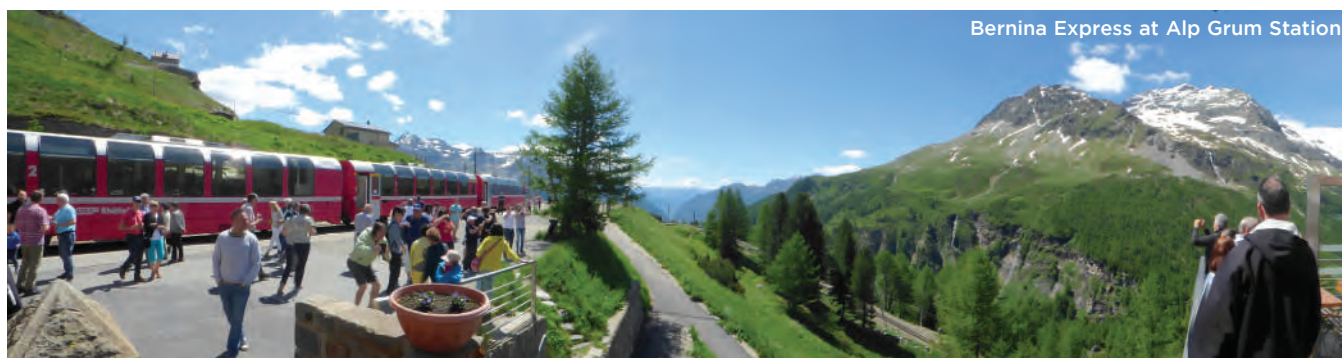


TRAVELMEDFORD.ORG



Germany and Switzerland

COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON



CC FLICKR/ELIOTT BROWN: bit.ly/2s3TLBN

Your source for Swiss rail adventures

Rail Source International owner Carmen Metcalf got hooked on rail travel in the 1990s when she worked for a tour operator in Switzerland that specialized in train packages. That experience made such an impact that, when Metcalf decided to open her own tour company in 2006, she knew she had to focus on rail tours showcasing the country she loved.

"Switzerland always exceeds the visitor's expectations," she says. "Pictures don't make up for sounds of the cow bells and church bells; the smells of the sausages grilling, the fresh crusty bread and hundreds of different cheeses; and the breathtaking views on top of the mountains."

The main itinerary she recommends for groups starts and ends in Zurich and goes to Pontresina, Zermatt, Montreux, Bern and Lucerne via Switzerland's efficient rail system.

The 11-day tour includes rides on three scenic routes—the Glacier Express Panoramic, the Golden Pass Classic and the Bernina Express line—as well as tours of the Lavaux wine region and La-Chaux-de-Fonds, which is known as the capital of Swiss watchmaking.

Metcalf also customizes a number of packages annually for FITs. "A very typical and popular itinerary is flying into Zurich and taking a direct train to Lucerne for a couple of nights to visit Mt. Pilatus," she adds. "Then it's on to Grindelwald or car-free Mürren for two or three nights where clients get to see a lot of waterfalls, hike through the mountains and do other thrilling activities such as rolling down the mountain on a trottibike."

To learn more, contact Metcalf at carmen@rsiworld.com or visit rsiworld.com.

The Appina of your eye

Since Appina Travel opened its doors in 2002, the family-owned tour company has helped thousands of travelers discover Germany's history, traditions, landscape, cuisine and art.

"We pride ourselves in being able to show groups a hidden side of Germany and take them off the beaten path," says Luis

Lintner, Appina's managing director. "It always makes us proud to have groups come and end up surprised at how Germany is so much more than bratwurst, beer and the Berlin Wall."

He recommends the following tours, which reveal unique aspects of German culture.



Porsche Museum, Stuttgart

CC WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/BACCHARUS: bit.ly/2s3TLBN

The Automobile Industry of South Germany Lovers of German cars can experience the country's renowned automotive culture during visits to factories and museums in southern Germany that are dedicated to Audi, BMW, Porsche and Mercedes.

From Baroque to Bauhaus This week-long itinerary highlights a range of architectural styles found throughout Germany. Travelers will see Baroque buildings in Würzburg, explore Munich's sleek modern structures, tour the Bauhaus School buildings in Dessau and discover Berlin's blend of concrete-slab and postmodern architecture.

Having a Feast in Germany On this tour, groups take a tasty journey across Germany. As they visit the different regions, they will discover local specialties such as fish in the north, beer in the south, wurst in the east and wine in the west.

Contact Lintner at luis.lintner@appina-travel.com or visit appina-travel.com to find out more. ☎

India

COMPILED BY KENDALL FLETCHER

Unite and unwind in India

India has become a popular setting for lavish destination weddings, and Uday Marwah, owner of Uday Tours and Travel Pvt. Ltd., has added a division to his company that manages wedding events in India and Sri Lanka.

"[The] Indian landscape is an excellent backdrop to the special occasion of a wedding. It is one of the leading countries for destination nuptials," he says. "In India, we have breathtaking palaces and forts, backwaters or beaches bathed in the orange glow of sunsets. India makes for the perfect setting."

Uday Tours and Travel offers a full list of accommodations for couples and their guests, as well as hospitality management, celebrity invites and bands for events. One unique option offered is Bollywood-style weddings, in which couples can marry in an actual Bollywood film studio with complete theme setup and colorful costumes.

"We also specialize in royal Maharaja-style weddings in Rajasthan and beach weddings in Goa, (and we) offer complete wedding solutions," Marwah says.

This year, he's also focused on offering more reasons for leisure travelers to stay in India for a minimum of two weeks and travel across the country.

"For North Americans, traveling to India is a minimum 14-hour flight," he says. "When they stay for two-plus weeks, we try and help them experience culture, religion, nature, food, customs we follow, traditions and wildlife in India. Our



UDAYTOUR.COM

new tour of Rajasthan and Central India now includes meeting, staying and interacting with locals during the journey. India offers lots of things to see and explore."

The company's other tours include cultural, adventure, beach, golf, agriculture and incentive packages.

For more information on Indian destination weddings and leisure tours, contact Marwah at uday@udaytour.com or visit udaytour.com.

Food for the soul: culinary tours of India

Specialized culinary tours in India are becoming more popular, including the offerings from the following two NTA members:

Delectable Destinations offers customized small group tours to India, each with itineraries planned by Carol Ketelson, European culture and culinary arts specialist. Ketelson teaches travelers the art of preparing food for the soul and body, and the history and passion behind many of India's well-known dishes.

Upcoming tours feature 14 days in India with interactive cooking classes, chef-guided market tours, culinary walks, fine dining and exploring the inner regions of Rajasthan and Delhi. A cooking

session and lunch will be held at Sujan in Jaipur, where participants will receive customized chef caps and Sujan aprons.

They will visit Glenburn plantation and experience a guided tour and tastings of Darjeeling tea, and they will walk through the tea fields and interact with the Glenburn tea pickers. The tour also will include five-star accommodations and cultural excursions to palaces, villages and marketplaces.

For more information, visit delectabledestinations.com.



Street food in Delhi

CAROL KETELSON/DELECTABLE DESTINATIONS

"Journey of the Senses" is a 10-day cultural and culinary delights tour of India's finest cuisines offered by **Pacific Delights Tours**. While group members are immersed in India's distinctive culinary scene, they're also taking in the land's rich history, architecture and countryside.

In Delhi, travelers take a cooking class and have dinner with culinary expert and author Komal Taneja. They visit the markets of New Delhi, where they can sample spices, nuts, locally made pickles and edible sheets of silver. In Agra, they gather for dinner at Peshawari Restaurant: ITC Mughal. A local family will host the group and offer a hands-on demonstration of making chapatti, an Indian bread. Travelers can enjoy king crab and tandoori dishes at Trishna Restaurant in Mumbai.

For more information, visit pacificdelighttours.com.

Courier's GUIDE TO NTA-MEMBER SHOPPING VENUES

Groups have plenty of shopping options awaiting them at the following NTA-member properties. As they travel, they will find discounts, local products, unique restaurants and other amenities during visits to these outlet centers, malls, name-brand stores, museum gift shops, craft villages and other retail attractions.

** Listings in this guide are based on a company's membership profile selections. The information was provided by the member contact and was current as of May 16. Please check NTAonline.com for updated information on NTA-member shopping venues and to learn more about the variety of services they offer.*

SHOPPING/RETAIL

CANADA

Philipsburg Duty Free Shop Inc.

Nancy Enright
3 Route 133
P.O. Box 330
Philipsburg, QC J0J 1N0
+1.450.248.4331
nancy@philipsburgdutyfree.com
philipsburgdutyfree.com

UNITED STATES

ARIZONA

Macerich Shopping Centers

Kate Birchler
11411 North Tatum Blvd.
Phoenix, AZ 85028
+1.602.953.6502
kate.birchler@macerich.com
macerichtourism.com

CALIFORNIA

Macy's Inc.

Keri Hanson
170 O'Farrell St., 11th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102
+1.415.954.6208
keri.hanson@macys.com
visitmacysusa.com

PIER 39

Jodi Cumming
Beach St. and The Embarcadero
Stairway 2, Level 3
San Francisco, CA 94133
+1.415.705.5500
jodi@pier39.com
pier39.com

Westfield Travel Collection

Eileen Hanson
865 Market St.
San Francisco, CA 94103
+1.310.689.5686
ehanson@westfield.com
westfieldtravelcollection.com

COLORADO

Outlets of Colorado — Craig Realty Group

Peggy Ziglin
7401 Blue Water Court
Fort Collins, CO 80525-8405
+1.970.232.9491
peggyz@craigrealtygroup.com
craigrealtygroup.com

FLORIDA

Ron Jon Surf Shop

Tracey Gray
4151 N. Atlantic Ave.
Cocoa Beach, FL 32931-3509
+1.321.799.8880
traceyg@rjss.com
ronjons.com

ILLINOIS

The Outlet Shoppes/ Horizon Group Properties

Patricia Wharton
10275 W. Higgins Road, Suite
560
Rosemont, IL 60018
+1.847.696.7634
pat.wharton@horizongroup.com
horizongroup.com

INDIANA

Simon: Malls/Premium Outlets/The Mills

Nora Barboe
225 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
+1.973.403.2586
nbarboe@simon.com
traveltrade.simon.com

MASSACHUSETTS

Yankee Candle Company Inc.

Molly MacMunn
25 Greenfield Road
South Deerfield, MA 01373
877.636.7707
mmacmun@yankeecandle.com
yankeecandle.com/village

MINNESOTA

Mall of America

Samantha Sommers
60 E. Broadway
Minneapolis, MN 55425-5510
+1.952.883.8499
samantha.sommers@moa.net
mallofamerica.com

NEVADA

Fashion Outlets — Las Vegas, Niagara, Chicago

Rachel Zheng
32100 Las Vegas Blvd. S, Suite 125
Jean, NV 89019-7022
+1.702.874.1400 (7020)
rachel.zheng@rouseproperties.com
fashionoutletlasvegas.com

NEW JERSEY

SHOP*DINE*PLAY*USA

Carolyn Feimster
2227 U.S. Highway One, #274
North Brunswick, NJ 08902
+1.732.249.6080
carolyn@
historichoppinganddining.com
historichoppinganddining.com

NEW YORK

Duty Free Americas

Harry Wade
200 Industrial Drive
Grand Island, NY 14072-1219
+1.716.903.7717
hwade@dutyfreeamericas.com
dutyfreeamericas.com

Tommy Hilfiger

Lisa Pappas
601 W. 26th St., 17th Floor
New York, NY 10001
+1.212.549.5638
lisapappas@tommy.com
tommy.com

NORTH CAROLINA

Tanger Properties

Jessica Reeves
3200 Northline Ave., Suite 260
Greensboro, NC 27408
+1.336.834.6831
jessica.reeves@tangeroutlets.com
tangeroutlet.com

OHIO

Kay Jewelers

Kris Land
375 Ghent Road
Akron, OH 44333
+1.330.668.5107
kland@jewels.com
kay.com

OREGON

Harry and David

Jody Power
2500 South Pacific Highway
Medford, OR 97501-8724
+1.541.864.2462
jpower@harryanddavid.com
harryanddavid.com

PENNSYLVANIA

Kitchen Kettle Village

Lisa Arrell
3529 Old Philadelphia Pike
Route 340
Intercourse, PA 17534-0380
+1.717.768.2706
larrell@kitchenkettle.com
kitchenkettle.com

YOUR MUST- SHOP STOP



**SAVE UP TO 65% AT OVER 60
BRAND-NAME STORES**

**MICHAEL KORS • NIKE FACTORY STORE • COACH • H&M
POTTERY BARN OUTLET • LEVI'S® OUTLET STORE
BANANA REPUBLIC FACTORY STORE • CALVIN KLEIN
BROOKS BROTHERS • TOMMY HILFIGER • LE CREUSET
OSHKOSH B'GOSH • AMERICAN EAGLE OUTFITTERS**

TEJONOUTLETS.COM



Located just 40 min. north on I-5.

Courier's Guide to NTA-Member Shopping Venues

SOUTH DAKOTA

Mt. Rushmore Black Hills Gold Factory & Outlet Store

Josh Holsworth
2707 Mount Rushmore Road
Rapid City, SD 57701-5324
+1.605.716.7971
josh.holsworth@teamridco.com
blackhillsgold.com

UTAH

City Creek Center

Rachel Bremer
50 South Main St.
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
+1.801.212.6338
rbremer@taubman.com
shopcitycreekcenter.com

WEST VIRGINIA

Tamarack

April Taylor
One Tamarack Park
I-77/64, Exit 45
Beckley, WV 25801-2674
+1.304.256.6843
ataylor@tamarackwv.com
tamarackwv.com

ATTRACTIONS/ EXPERIENCES

CANADA

ALBERTA

Heritage Park Historical Village

Sandy Wilde
1900 Heritage Drive SW
Calgary, AB T2V 2X3
+1.403.268.8612
swilde@heritagepark.ca
heritagepark.ca

ONTARIO

CN Tower

Lisa Tompkins
301 Front St. W
Toronto, ON M5V 2T6
+1.416.601.4719
ltompkins@cntower.ca
cntower.ca

Niagara Parks, Restaurants, Attractions

Jennifer Thomas
7400 Portage Road
P.O. Box 150
Niagara Falls, ON L2E 6T2
+1.905.356.2241 (2213)
jthomas@niagaraparks.com
niagaraparkstraveltrade.com

Skylon Tower

Anita Pang Hrepic
5200 Robinson St.
Niagara Falls, ON L2G 2A3
+1.905.356.2651
apang-hrepic@skylon.com
skylon.com

QUÉBEC

Québec Copper Art Studio & Museum Albert Gilles

Palmyre Gilles
7450 Blvd. Suite-Anne
Chateau-Richer, QC G0A 1N0
+1.418.824.4224
palmyre@cuivres-albertgilles.com
albertgilles.com

UNITED STATES

ALASKA

Alaska Native Heritage Center

Lauren Hughes
8800 Heritage Drive
Anchorage, AK 99506
+1.907.330.8013
lhughes@alaskanative.net
alaskanative.net

ARIZONA

Blazin' M Ranch

Lori Mabery
1875 Mabery Ranch Road
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
+1.928.634.0334
lori@blazinm.com
blazinm.com

Forever Resorts

Michelle Kien
7501 E. McCormick Parkway
Scottsdale, AZ 85258-3495
+1.480.998.7199 (7114)
mkien@foreverresorts.com
travel-forever.com/17cjan

Verde Canyon Railroad

Teresa Propeck
300 North Broadway
Clarkdale, AZ 86324-2302
877.674.3835
tpropeck@verdecanyonrr.net
verdecanyonrr.com

ARKANSAS

Ozark Folk Center State Park

Michalle Stevens
1032 Park Ave.
Mountain View, AR 72560
+1.870.269.3851
michalle.stevens@arkansas.gov
ozarkfolkcenter.com

CALIFORNIA

Hearst Castle

Jim Allen
750 Hearst Castle Road
San Simeon, CA 93452-9740
+1.805.927.2093
jim.allen@parks.ca.gov
hearstcastle.org

Hilmar Cheese Company Visitor Center

Denise Skidmore
9001 Lander Ave.
P.O. Box 910
Hilmar, CA 95324-8320
+1.209.656.1196
dskidmore@hilmarcheese.com
hilmarcheese.com

The Huntington Library, Art Collections & Botanical Gardens

Jane Sandmeier
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, CA 91108-1218
+1.626.405.2240
jsandmeier@huntington.org
huntington.org

The Living Desert

Roshan Patel
47900 Portola Ave.
Palm Desert, CA 92260-6156
+1.760.346.9810
rpatel@livingdesert.org
livingdesert.org

Maritime Museum of San Diego

Warren Potts
1492 N. Harbor Drive
San Diego, CA 92101
+1.619.234.9153
info@sdmaritime.org
sdmaritime.org

COLORADO

Garden of the Gods Visitor & Nature Center

Penny Whalen
1805 N. 30th St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80904-1247
+1.719.219.0105
pwhalen@gardenofgods.com
gardenofgods.com

Royal Gorge Bridge and Park

Dona Basham
4218 County Road 3A
Cañon City, CO 81212
+1.719.276.8310
dbasham@royalgorgebridge.com
royalgorgebridge.com

CONNECTICUT

Mark Twain House & Museum

Kimberly Beal
351 Farmington Ave.
Hartford, CT 06105
+1.860.280.3117
kim.beal@marktwainhouse.org
marktwainhouse.org

Mystic Seaport

Sarah Spencer
75 Greenmanville Ave.
Mystic, CT 06355-1946
+1.860.572.5309
sarah.spencer@mysticseaport.org
mysticseaport.org

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

International Spy Museum

Lori Scott
800 F St. NW
Washington, DC 20004-1505
+1.202.654.2844
lscott@spymuseum.org
spymuseum.org

Museum of the Bible

Kelly Martin
400 4th St. SW
Washington, DC 20024
+1.202.848.1553
kelly.martin@mbible.org
museumofthebible.org

National Geographic Museum

Cleon McMillan
1145 17th St. NW
Washington, DC 20036
+1.202.857.7281
cmcmilla@ngs.org
ngmuseum.org

FLORIDA

The Dali Museum

Jim Nixon
One Dali Blvd.
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
+1.727.623.4708
jnixon@thedali.org
thedali.org

GEORGIA

Telfair Museums

Mindy Shepard
207 York St.
Savannah, GA 31401
+1.912.665.0648
shepardm@telfair.org
telfair.org

ILLINOIS

The Field Museum

Aimee Willetts
1400 S. Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, IL 60605-2827
+1.312.665.7300
awilletts@fieldmuseum.org
fieldmuseum.org

INDIANA

Amish Acres

Janis Logsdon
1600 W. Market St.
Nappanee, IN 46550-1731
+1.574.773.4188
janislogsdon@amishacres.com
amishacres.com

KANSAS

Prairiefire

Donna Allen
5661 W. 135th St.
Overland Park, KS 66223
+1.913.338.3800
donna@merrillcompanies.com
visitprairiefire.com

LOUISIANA

Bayou Rum Distillery

Lisa Cortese
20909 S. Frontage Road
Lacassine, LA 70650
+1.251.327.7778
lisa@laspirits.net
bayourum.com

So much, so close!

No matter your interests, Huntington has something for everyone!



Let your folks nuzzle a llama, celebrate Appalachian heritage in a variety of historic museums, catch a show at the Keith-Albee Theatre, or enjoy great meals and local shopping! Take advantage of one of our popular itineraries, or let us customize one for you!

Cabell
Huntington CONVENTION
& VISITORS BUREAU
WEST VIRGINIA

#visithuntingtonwv



THE REAL HATFIELD AND MCCOY FEUD

Adventure through actual feud sites on the real Hatfield and McCoy tour. From romantic entanglements to property disputes, learn how two families' mountain pride led to the most famous feud in American history.

MOVIES, MINERALS AND MINING TOUR

Stops include a wide array of fun from Blenko Glass, one of the finest glass-making facilities in the world, to Hillbilly Hot Dogs, a restaurant like no other featuring gourmet hot dogs with quirky, down-home charm. Visit actual "We Are...Marshall" movie set locations and the Marshall University Memorial Fountain before heading over to West Virginia's only Smithsonian-affiliate, Heritage Farm Museum & Village!

CABELL COUNTY | VISITHUNTINGTONWV.ORG | 304.525.7333

Contact Anna at anna@visithuntingtonwv.org to set up your visit to Huntington! Visit us online for a complete listing of Cabell County's attractions, events and festivals.

Courier's Guide to NTA-Member Shopping Venues

Longue Vue House & Gardens

Zeneda White
7 Bamboo Road
New Orleans, LA 70124
+1.504.488.5488
zwhite@longuevue.com
longuevue.com

The New Orleans School of Cooking

Elizabeth Leighton
524 Saint Louis St.
New Orleans, LA 70130-2118
+1.504.620.9461
elizabeth@nosoc.com
neworleansschoolofcooking.com

MASSACHUSETTS

Plimoth Plantation Inc.

Janet Young
137 Warren Ave.
Plymouth, MA 02360
+1.508.503.2653
groupsales@plimoth.org
plimoth.org

MISSOURI

Gateway Arch Riverfront

Kelly Hutchison
211 North Broadway, Suite 700
St. Louis, MO 63102-2759
+1.314.982.1400 (3080)
kahutchison@gatewayarch.com
gatewayarch.com

Silver Dollar City/ Showboat Branson Belle

Joey Thorsen
399 Silver Dollar City Parkway
Branson, MO 65616
+1.417.338.8009
jthorsen@silverdollarcity.com
silverdollarcity.com

Six Flags St. Louis

Leanne Creek
4900 Six Flags Road
Eureka, MO 63075
+1.314.650.5818
mwesterman@sftp.com
sixflags.com/stlouis

Starlite Theatre

Heather Davis
3115 West 76 Country Blvd.
Branson, MO 65616
+1.417.337.9333
hdavis@starlitetheatre.com
starlitetheatre.com

Welk Resort Branson

Tammy Slentz
1984 State Highway 165
Branson, MO 65616
+1.417.336.1227
tslentz@welkgroup.com
welkresorts.com

NEVADA

Springs Preserve

Pietra Sardelli
P.O. Box 98947
Las Vegas, NV 89193-8947
+1.702.822.7746
pietra.sardelli@springspreserve.org
springspreserve.org

The Tour Exchange

Jacque Payne
2350 S. Jones Blvd., Suite 101
Las Vegas, NV 89146
+1.702.445.5114
jacque@thetourexchange.com
thetourexchange.com

NEW YORK

American Museum of Natural History

James Cuebas
Central Park West at 79th St.
New York, NY 10024
+1.212.496.3676
jcuebas@amnh.org
amnh.org

Corning Museum of Glass

Sally Berry
1 Museum Way
Corning, NY 14830-2253
+1.607.438.5400
berryisk@cmog.org
cmog.org/groups

One Niagara: "The Gateway to the Falls"

Kari Ann Bullman
360 Rainbow Blvd. S
Niagara Falls, NY 14303
+1.716.804.0008
karibullman@gmail.com
niagarafallswelcomecenter.com

Turning Stone Resort Casino

Jeremy Cadrette
Tour & Travel Sales Department
5218 Patrick Road
Verona, NY 13478
+1.315.361.7958
jeremy.cadrette@turningstone.com
turningstone.com

OHIO

Cincinnati Museum Center

Violet Rae Webster
1301 Western Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45203-1138
+1.513.287.7068
vwebster@cincymuseum.org
cincymuseum.org/groups

OREGON

Oregon Shakespeare Festival

Freda Casillas
15 South Pioneer St.
Ashland, OR 97520
+1.541.482.2111 (242)
fredac@osfashland.org
osfashland.org

World of Speed

Dave Schaeffer
27490 SW 95th Ave.
Wilsonville, OR 97070
+1.503.563.6449
david@worldofspeed.org
worldofspeed.org

PENNSYLVANIA

Hershey's Chocolate World

Julie Payne
251 Park Blvd.
Hershey, PA 17033
+1.717.512.0903
jpayne@rlbmarketing.com
hersheys.com/chocolateworld

Landis Valley Village & Farm Museum

Joyce Perkinson
2451 Kissel Hill Road
Lancaster, PA 17601-4809
+1.717.581.0431
c-jperkins@pa.gov
landisvalleymuseum.org

SOUTH CAROLINA

Magnolia Plantation

Sharon Newton
3550 Ashley River Road
Charleston, SC 29414-7109
+1.843.571.1266
tours@magnoliaplantation.com
magnoliaplantation.com

SOUTH DAKOTA

Akta Lakota Museum

Dixie Thompson
1301 N. Main St.
Chamberlain, SD 57325
+1.605.234.3452
dthompson@stjo.org
aktalakota.org

TENNESSEE

Belle Meade Plantation

Mark James
5025 Harding Road
Nashville, TN 37205
+1.615.356.0501
grouptours@
bellemeadplantation.com
bellemeadplantation.com

Fontanel Attractions

Jade Green
4125 Whites Creek Pike
Nashville, TN 37189-9124
+1.615.693.2480
jgreen@fontanelmansion.com
fontanel.com

Grand Ole Opry Entertainment Group

Wayne Chandler
2804 Opryland Drive
Nashville, TN 37214-1209
+1.615.882.5435
wchandler@
gaylordentertainment.com
opry.com/groups

Loretta Lynn's Ranch

Patsy Russell
44 Hurricane Mills Road
Hurricane Mills, TN 37078
+1.931.296.7700
ranchinfo@lorettalynn.com
lorettalynn.com

TEXAS

Houston Museum of Natural Science

Chris Arreaga
5555 Hermann Park Drive
Houston, TX 77030
+1.713.639.4724
carreaga@hmns.org
hmns.org

UTAH

This Is The Place Heritage Park

Tresha Kramer
2601 E. Sunnyside Ave.
Salt Lake City, UT 84108
+1.801.652.0353
tkramer@thisistheplace.org
thisistheplace.org

VIRGINIA

Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation

Joan Heikens
Route 31 S
Williamsburg, VA 23185
+1.757.253.4838
joan.heikens@jyf.virginia.gov
historyisfun.org

WASHINGTON

Space Needle & Chihuly Garden and Glass

Lynsey Birdwell
400 Broad St.
Seattle, WA 98109-4607
+1.206.905.2186
lynseyb@spaceneedle.com
spaceneedle.com

WEST VIRGINIA

Oglebay Resort & Conference Center

David Flatley
465 Lodge Drive
Wheeling, WV 26003-1600
+1.304.243.4000
dflatley@oglebay-resort.com
oglebay-resort.com

WYOMING

Buffalo Bill Center of the West

Debra Elwood
720 Sheridan Ave.
Cody, WY 82414-3428
+1.307.578.4114
debrae@centerofthewest.org
centerofthewest.org

National Museum of Wildlife Art of the United States

Maggie Davis
2820 Rungius Road
Jackson, WY 83001
+1.307.732.5402
mdavis@wildlifeart.org
wildlifeart.org

COMMUNITY

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE NTA FAMILY



Inside and out: It's been a busy stretch for NTA staff and members, who took part in a pair of Tourism Cares projects and attended IPW in Washington, D.C., and the Orlando Meet-up. Clockwise from upper left: NTA's Lin Wang (director, China Market Services) at IPW; Dan Flores (Maverick Aviation Group) at Tourism Cares for D.C.; Pam Inman with Ashleigh Zeigler of Planet Hollywood (Orlando Meet-up); a volunteer works at Tourism Cares for Detroit.

Meet the Members	50
Community News	52
New Members	54
Ad Index/NTA Events Calendar	55
AfterWords	56

Major Marine Tours & Harbor 360 Hotel

SEWARD AND WHITTIER, ALASKA

NTA contact: Lindsey Middendorf,
director of sales and marketing

Office Phone: +1.907.274.7300

Website: majormarine.com

NTA member since: 1997

How do your boat tours provide a unique way to see Alaska?

There's no experience quite like seeing a humpback whale breaching or watching a huge chunk of ice break off a tide-water glacier and crash into the water. These incredible sights are best seen on the water on a cruise in Kenai Fjords National Park or Prince William Sound, and our tours provide customers with an exciting, comfortable and educational Alaska experience. Another truly unique experience: enjoying one of our signature glacier margaritas in front of a glacier!

What is your most requested tour?

Our 6-Hour Kenai Fjords National Park Cruise is our most popular cruise,

providing great opportunities for wildlife viewing of whales, Steller sea lion colonies and bird rookeries. This cruise spends time in front of Holgate Glacier, an actively calving tide-water glacier, and it also features National Park Ranger narration and our famous Alaska salmon and prime rib buffet, freshly prepared onboard and served during the cruise.

Anything new coming up you want tour operators to know about?

For the 2017 season we started a new orca-focused cruise, the Orca Quest Cruise, which departs from Seward during the prime time for orca whale watching.

What is your favorite vacation memory?

It's hard to beat mountain adventures in Alaska, especially staying at the Sheldon Mountain House on the Ruth Glacier on Denali. The coolest trip that I've ever



done outside of Alaska was a 10-day hiking trip on a trail called the Haute Route, which travels 130 miles from Chamonix, France, to Zermatt, Switzerland.

What is the most interesting thing you've ever eaten?

Grilled octopus leg from a street vendor in Thailand.

For more information, contact Middendorf at lindsey@majormarine.com.

Vermont Tourism Network

MONTPELIER, VERMONT

NTA contact: Karen Ballard,
program manager

Office Phone: +1.802.262.2129

Website: vermonttourismnetwork.com

NTA member since: 1984

What do you enjoy most about working for the Vermont Tourism Network?

I love Vermont, and I love the people. There's a passion here at every destination, and it's something I'm proud to showcase. I know that when a group visits Vermont, no matter where, they will have an amazing experience, and that's a good thing.

What are some of the things travelers experience when they visit Vermont?

With a population of just over 600,000, Vermont retains that small-town quality that people seek when escaping the noise in today's world. That doesn't mean

it's a sleepy place to visit, however! We have many great attractions statewide, including 20 alpine ski resorts, most with four-season experiences. We are known for farm-to-table, artisan food and cheese, and our craft brewing industry sets the standard. And we are known for our people, our passion and our authenticity. A tour group could visit every year and see something new every time.

How does working with your organization benefit a tour operator?

Vermont Tourism Network is a one-stop resource for tour operators, and it includes excellent receptive operators and charter companies, along with partners statewide who provide all of the components to plan a tour. I am also a resource for them and can help to fill in a blank spot on the itinerary or refer and advise great options to make their tours memorable.



Are you a beach girl, a mountain girl or a big-city girl?

I am a mountain girl. Only a mountain girl would end up in Vermont via Colorado after living in Florida for 30 years. I need to be in the mountains, not just travel to them to visit.

What's your favorite movie or TV show?

"Mad Men," and I'm so sad it ended.

For more information, contact Ballard at kballard@vtchamber.com.

Sioux Falls CVB

SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

NTA contact: Jackie Wentworth, sales manager

Office Phone: +1.605.373.2028

Website: visitsiouxfalls.com

NTA member since: 1979

What are some highlights for travelers heading to Sioux Falls?

Our namesake, the Falls of the Big Sioux River, is in the heart of our city and encompasses a 123-acre park featuring Sioux Quartzite, a pink rock that is the hardest rock, second only to the diamond. It was used for many of the buildings in our historical downtown, which is bustling with unique restaurants whose chefs are committed to using locally sourced ingredients. Also, the craft brewery and winery scene has exploded, making Sioux Falls a foodie mecca.

Can you talk about some of the travel ideas provided by the Sioux Falls CVB?

The featured videos on our website provide a lens for consumers to see Sioux Falls through the eyes of an urban explorer, a family, a foodie and more. Plus, our CVB staff is dedicated to the motorcoach industry by helping group tour operators with customized itineraries, hotel procurement, attraction information and step-on guides.

What are some exciting attractions and venues?

Sioux Falls is home to SculptureWalk, the largest annual exhibit of public sculptures in the world. The sculptures are displayed all year throughout downtown Sioux Falls. Since the sculptures are owned by the artist and on loan for one year, the sculptures change annually, so the exhibit is always fresh and exciting. We are also home to the Washington Pavilion and the Denny Sanford Premier Center, the largest concert venue between Minneapolis and



Denver, so we really serve as the entertainment capital of the region.

What do you like to do when you're not hard at work?

My heart is happiest when I am either attending a theater production or gardening. I love digging in the dirt; it connects you with the earth.

For more information, contact Wentworth at jwentworth@siouxfalls.com.

Elizabeth Destination Marketing Organization

ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY

NTA contact: Jennifer Costa, director

Office Phone: +1.908.355.9797

Website: goelizabethnj.com

NTA member since: 2016

Elizabeth has received recent attention in the media as an up-and-coming destination. Tell us why.

This city stands on its own. With close proximity to New York City, it serves as an amazing alternative destination. Elizabeth has 0 percent tax on clothes and shoes, and it's also serving up some amazing cuisine in atmospheric venues.

What are the must-see attractions?

Liberty Hall Museum is one of the best local attractions for Elizabeth—from American Revolutionary War history to Alexander Hamilton history and an extensive Portuguese Madeira wine collection from the 1700s. Another great attraction is The Mills at Jersey Gardens,

with over 200 high-end outlet stores.

What are some upcoming events in Elizabeth?

Elizabeth celebrates the various international heritages that make this city so diverse. Along with its festivals, Elizabeth is home to a 15-mile bike tour every May and a historical re-enactment every October. Some new events that are coming to Elizabeth include car shows, fashion week and a summer concert series.

What are your favorite tunes?

I have eclectic tastes in music; it all depends on my mood! Everything from



Dean Martin and Sinatra to folklore, Portuguese Fado and Polish polka to smooth jazz. Can't forget about today's J-Lo, Drake and Taylor.

For more information, contact Costa at jcosta@goelizabethnj.com.

Visit Clarksville
Frances Manzitto
+1.931.245.4345 | 800.530.2487
frances@visitclarksvilletn.com
visitclarksvilletn.com

From our picturesque and historic downtown to our rolling countryside, Clarksville welcomes you with open arms. Bringing your group to Clarksville means a trip full of Southern hospitality, unique attractions and shopping, great food and memories that will last a lifetime. Find out more at visitclarksvilletn.com.

COMMUNITY NEWS

NTA members are indicated in bold text. Do you have news you'd like to share with the NTA membership? Please send it to Gabe Webb, *Courier* writer, at gabe.webb@ntaservicesinc.com.



CC FLICKR/RICHARD RICCIARDI: b6lly2wkr8Y

D.C. sets domestic visitation record

Destination DC announced that the District of Columbia welcomed 20 million domestic visitors in 2016. This is a record high, and it represents a 3.6 percent increase over 2015. Destination DC also reports that visitors spent a record \$7.3 billion.

"These numbers articulate the national appetite for new and enduring tourism inventory in the District, as well as Destination DC's ability to capture consumers on multiple platforms," said **Elliott L. Ferguson**, president and CEO of the organization.

Mayflower promotes new president, hires new sales manager

Mayflower Tours promoted **Nish Patel** to company president in May. Patel has been with Mayflower for 17 years, and he had been serving as chief operating officer.

"We are gratified and most pleased that Nish has accepted our offer to make him president," said **John Stachnik**, former president of Mayflower Tours. Stachnik owns the company with his wife, Mary. "Over the past 17 years with Mayflower, he has worked tirelessly in all areas of the business. He can speak with as much authority as possible on areas ranging from travel insurance matters to drafting and implementing short- and long-term strategic plans."

"I believe with the platform we have built that Mayflower is poised for even greater growth in upcoming years with Nish at the helm," said **Mary Stachnik**.

"I am honored to assume the presidency of Mayflower Tours," Patel said. "The trust they have placed in me has allowed us to explore new areas and successfully launch new programs. I have a fantastic team here, and with their support we will continue on the path of success in the coming years."

Mayflower also announced hiring **Michel Madjerich** as its southeast sales manager.

"My passion has always been groups," said Madjerich. "Mayflower Tours' impeccable reputation for group business prevails by offering gold-standard, all-inclusive experiences. I am very enthusiastic about being an integral part of the Mayflower Tours sales team."

Madjerich has more than 15 years of experience in the travel industry. She has previously worked for **Scenic River Cruises**, **Delta Vacations** and **Celebrity Cruises**.



Tourism Richmond names new CEO

British Columbia-based **Tourism Richmond** named **Bruce Okabe** as its new CEO in March. He now leads the DMO

following the departure of its previous chief executive in late 2016.

Okabe previously held executive positions in marketing, strategy and management at TELUS Corporation. In 2006 he became deputy minister of tourism, sport and the arts in the government of British Columbia, and in 2009 he was appointed CEO of **Travel Alberta**.

"Bruce is an exceptional leader who has an outstanding track record with DMOs and large businesses in Canada," said **Eda Koot**, chair of Tourism Richmond. "We are very fortunate to have him lead our organization in the next phase of its evolution. His vision and leadership will be a tremendous benefit to our stakeholders and destination."

"Richmond has become a well-known destination, and I'm excited to be part of the team at Tourism Richmond," said Okabe. "I believe there is a great untapped opportunity in marketing our city to the world. I am very much looking forward to working with our stakeholders to unlock our potential."



Barrett leads Pocono Mountains CVB

Christopher Barrett is the new president and CEO of the **Pocono Mountains CVB**. He

replaced **Carl Wilgus**, who is retiring after leading the CVB for nearly 10 years.

Barrett comes to the CVB from Target Media, an East Coast advertising firm, where he had been CFO, COO and vice president. He has also worked in sales and marketing positions for Hershey Entertainment & Resorts.

"We are extremely excited to have Chris on board leading a top-notch destination marketing team," said **Genevieve Reese**, chair of the Pocono Mountains CVB's search committee.



Kidder promoted to president and CEO of Louisiana Travel Promotion Association

Jill Kidder was named president and CEO

of the **Louisiana Travel Promotion Association** in May. Prior to her promotion, she served 10 years as one of two co-executive directors.

"I am honored to help lead Louisiana's tourism industry," said Kidder. "This is such an important time in the state's economic development efforts, and tourism plays a vital role."

"For the past decade, LTPA has enjoyed a unique, successful leadership structure with two much-admired tourism pros sharing the top job," said LTPA Board Chairman **Mark Romig**. "In December, our board voted unanimously to shift Jill into the full-time role of president and CEO. This is a marquee moment in the association's history, and we are excited about this leadership transition."

Kidder has worked in tourism and hospitality for more than 30 years. Prior to joining the LTPA staff, she worked as in marketing and sales for Rapides Parish, the Alexandria/Pineville CVB and the Alexandria Riverfront Center. She has also worked for hotels in Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana. ☘



Black Friday in July?

Serious savings come early at NTA. Don't wait until November's Black Friday to sign up for TREX. After all, the *earlier* you register, the *better* matched your appointments will be.

- TREX17 St. Louis attendees receive 50% off reg fees for San Antonio until July 14.
- Seller early-bird rates apply until July 14 if you couldn't make St. Louis—a \$300 savings!
- More buyers: 80% of NTA tour operators only can be found at Travel Exchange.

Visit NTAonline.com/convention to register, sponsor and save.



Hurry!
Discounts
on TREX
registration
end July 14.

NEW MEMBERS

The following is a list of organizations that joined NTA recently. To access complete information on each of these new members, including a company description, log on to NTAonline.com and go to the member searches.

DMO

Denton Convention & Visitors Bureau

Dana Lodge
Denton, TX 76201-9046 USA
discoverdenton.com

TOUR OPERATORS

America Super Travel Inc.

Julie He
La Puente, CA 91746 USA

Eastern Travel Inc.

Brian Mei
Salt Lake City, UT 84115 USA
easterntravel.com

Let's Travel Services Limited

Ian Glass
Harrow, HA1 2EN England
letstravelservices.com

Wanderlust Travel Tours

Hugh Barnes
Winchester, MA 01890 USA
wanderlusttraveltours.com

YY Travel

Suki Tang
New York, NY 11355 USA

TOUR SUPPLIERS

6 Columbus Hotel

Samara Yigitsoy
New York, NY 10019 USA
sixtyhotels.com/six-columbus

Dave & Buster's Orlando

Michelle Liloia
Orlando, FL 32819 USA
daveandbusters.com/orlando

Discover New York, A Fourth Wall Events DMC

Becky Ford
New York, NY 10018 USA
dnykg.com

Hilton Worldwide Focused Worldwide Division

Convonta Stone
Memphis, TN 38117 USA
hiltonmanagementservices.com

Johnny Cash Museum & Patsy Cline Museum

Keith Wright
Nashville, TN 37201 USA
johnnycashmuseum.com

Kiln Moonshine Tours LLC

Al Saucier
Diamondhead, MS 39525 USA
alsaucier.com

Lucero Olive Oil

Debbie Gokhan
Corning, CA 96021 USA
lucerooliveoil.com

Park Central Hotel

Henrietta Weiner
San Francisco, CA 94103 USA
parkcentralsf.com

Six Flags Fiesta Texas

Ashley Williams
San Antonio, TX 78257-9503 USA
sixflags.com/fiestatexas

TRAVEL PLANNERS

Network Travel

Carolyn Moseley
Philadelphia, PA 19153 USA

Shillelagh Travel Club

Trevor Major
Vienna, VA 22180 USA
shillelaghtravelclub.com

ASSOCIATE

Evaneos

Loredana Lechner
Ile de France, 75009 France
evaneos.com

CORPORATE PARTNERS

Centaur Systems Inc.

Rafeek Kottai
Hoffman Estates, IL 60192-4143 USA
centaursystemsinc.com

UATP

Jody Piland
Washington, DC 20005 USA
uatp.com

Where in the World is COURIER?



Get creative with a cover of *Courier* and email your photo to Bob Rouse, bob.rouse@ntastaff.com.

AD INDEX

NTA would like to thank the following *Courier* advertisers for their support of the association. Advertisers with a ★ are new advertisers.

AFEX 13 afex.com +1.646.231.7805	Chattanooga Convention & Visitors Bureau ... 37 chattanoogaafun.com +1.423.424.4439	New England Development 21 shopashevilleoutlets.com +1.828.333.6282
Aon Affinity Berkely TravelInside Back Cover berkely.com 800.383.9617	Delta Air Lines, Inc.Inside Front Cover delta.com +1.404.474.2501	The Outlets at Tejon Ranch 45 tejonoutlets.com +1.609.397.4242 (124)
★ Argosy CruisesBack Cover argosycruises.com +1.206.255.1530	★ Derby Dinner Playhouse 31 derbydinner.com +1.812.288.2632	Pigeon Forge Department of Tourism 35 mypigeonforge.com 800.251.9100
★ Ashland Hills Hotel and Suites 40 ashlandhillshotel.com +1.541.488.1700	Graceland & Guest House at Graceland 36 graceland.com +1.901.332.3322	Travel Medford 41 travelmedford.org +1.541.621.2804
★ Cabell-Huntington Convention & Visitors Bureau 47 wvvisit.org +1.304.525.7333	Maid of the Mist 9 maidofthemist.com +1.716.284.8897	Tulalip Tribes/Quil Ceda Village 5 tulalipresort.com +1.360.716.6600
	Mohegan Sun 7 mohegansun.com +1.860.862.8988	UPS 11 savewithups.com/nta 800.636.2377

NTA EVENTS

Save these dates in 2017 and beyond to connect with new partners and destinations.

For more information on these events, click the EVENTS tab on NTAonline.com.



San Antonio
Dec. 14-18, 2017



Milwaukee
Nov. 4-8, 2018



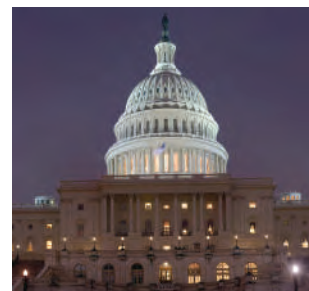
CONTACT
Charleston, SC | April 19-21, 2018

Charleston, S.C.
April 19-21, 2018



CONTACT
Tucson, AZ • March 28-30, 2019

Tucson, Arizona
March 28-30, 2019



DESTINATION CAPITOL HILL

Washington, D.C.
March 21-22, 2018

LEFT: RISDON PHOTOGRAPHY.
RIGHT: CC WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/DILFF:
bit.ly/1BJ5KD

A lesson in relationships

A Tourism Cares scholarship student learned from mentors and moments at her first Travel Exchange

BY EMILY AYSUCUE

NTA ONLINE DESCRIBED Travel Exchange '17 in St. Louis as a “chance for members to meet the travel world under one roof ... and make lifelong friends while you’re at it.” I knew I achieved this potential after seeing “relationships” noted five separate times in my conference notes.

Social capital is the currency of our industry, and while shadowing my mentors at the event, I witnessed many appointments where time was spent sharing family photos and catching up on personal developments. Even appointments between new acquaintances were electric through the conduit of a love for travel and an altruistic desire to help one another succeed. These authentic bonds inspired me to carry that industry tradition forward wherever my career path takes me.

My time with two mentors was invaluable. Sitting with Lisa Itel at the Travel Oregon booth exposed me not only to progressive programs such as Travel Oregon Forever, but also to the synergy between the state travel office and the other Oregon destinations.

My second mentor was Melody Johnson, whose entrepreneurial journey includes owning and operating an inn on Mt. Hood and, now, running Falcon’s Crest. As a student, I read and write about entrepreneurs as the engine of innovation in tourism, but at Travel Exchange I had the opportunity to spend time with a boots-on-the-ground entrepreneur.

What struck me about Melody was her upbeat attitude, even when it was close to quitting time. Noticing her full appointment book, I commented on how tired she must be. She informed me “there is no time to be tired” and then invited me for some ice cream from the Oregon booth.



Emily Ayscue with, at left, mentor Melody Johnson and, at right, fellow Tourism Cares scholar E'Lisha Fogle.



In the bubble of academia at the University of Georgia, I sometimes feel disconnected from the industry that I love and study because I do not get to interact with the people who actually make it all work. Because of my mentoring opportunities, though, I have recommitted myself to remaining relevant to our industry by building relationships with those at every level of operations.

It was exciting to develop a friendship with E'Lisha Fogle, a fellow Tourism Cares scholar who also is working towards a sustainable tourism doctorate. And the diversity of career goals and experiences of the other 15 Tourism Cares scholars was impressive. From concert management to finance for cruise lines and education abroad, it seemed we covered every aspect of the industry.

Along with a shared passion to travel and to provide hospitality to others on the move, we also have an inherent relationship with the communities that host us. These communities provide infrastructure, culture and space for tourism to succeed. The Tourism Cares workshop “Engaging Clients in Giving and Meaning” featured a diverse panel of industry stakeholders whose corporate social responsibility initiatives meet the needs of communities and reflect the values of the companies:

- Tara Hippensteel explained how Hard Rock Café created their CSR groove in the industry with Hard Rock Heals, a charity that supports music-centric health and wellness

programs and funds scholarships around the world.

- Kate Desvenain told us that Academic Travel Abroad’s Fund for Education Abroad provides grants and scholarships to American students, enabling them to engage in high-quality education programs overseas.
- Nish Patel explained that, in honor of the U.S. National Park Service centennial last year, Mayflower Tours donated \$5 for each person they took through a park to Tourism Cares for that organization’s restoration projects within the parks.
- And Lisa Itel described the Travel Oregon Forever fund, in which business owners join together to support tourism projects all across the state.

All of the relationships we forge in this industry provide us with social capital to accomplish our common goal, which was nicely summarized by Bruce Beckham, former executive director of Tourism Cares: “In travel and tourism you make people’s dreams come true.”

Through our commitment to authentic bonds and progressive development pathways, I believe that we can continue fulfilling dreams for many years to come. 📍

Emily Ayscue attended Travel Exchange '17 as a scholarship recipient in the Bruce Beckham Scholarship Fund/NTA Mentoring Program.

This essay has been edited for length.



Now available online for you and your clients!

For more information about the NTA Travel Protection Plan:

Call 1.800.388.1470

Fax 516.294.0609

Email geni.priolo@aon.com

- Enroll in the NTA Travel Protection plans – Easy as 1,2,3
- Enroll anywhere anytime!
- Now available online for you and your clients!
- Add link to your website browser www.nta.aontravelprotect.com

Aon Affinity is the brand name for the brokerage and program administration operations of Affinity Insurance Services, Inc. (TX 13695); (AR 244489); in CA & MN, AIS Affinity Insurance Agency, Inc. (CA 0795465); in OK, AIS Affinity Insurance Services, Inc.; in CA, Aon Affinity Insurance Services, Inc. (CA 0G94493), Aon Direct Insurance Administrators and Berkely Insurance Agency and in NY, AIS Affinity Insurance Agency. Affinity Insurance Services is acting as a Managing General Agent as that term is defined in section 626.015(14) of the Florida Insurance Code. As an MGA we are acting on behalf of our carrier partner.

SAY YES TO NEW *Adventures*

Tillicum Excursion A HALF-DAY ISLAND EXPERIENCE!



Mention NTA Magazine and get a complimentary ticket for your bus driver/tour guide.



Your friend with a boat!

5 Sightseeing Tours:

Tillicum Excursion • Harbor Cruise • Locks Cruise
Lake Union Cruise • Lake Washington Cruise

#ArgosyCruises



ArgosyCruises.com

Seattle Waterfront Pier 54/55
1101 Alaskan Way Seattle, WA 98101