

COURIER

DELIVERING BUSINESS ESSENTIALS TO NTA MEMBERS

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2017

And aweigh we go!

**Museums provide
see-worthy experiences**

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**DMOS DITCH THE
TRADITIONAL PITCH**

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**THE ORIGINAL
MARGARITAVILLE**

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**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SEEKS INPUT ON FEES**

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Setting sail from the Maritime Museum of San Diego





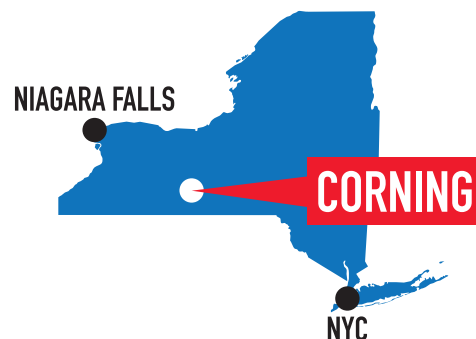
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OF GLASS**





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August/September 2017

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That ship has sailed

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► 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

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DESTINATIONS

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Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas

Atlantic Canada

Alberta, British Columbia, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Wyoming

Scandinavia

Portugal and Spain

City Spotlight: Las Vegas

SPECIAL COVERAGE

2018 Distinguished Dozen
Beach Destinations and Attractions

DEADLINES

Space: Oct. 6 | Material: Oct. 16

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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.



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Bob Rouse

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HAPPY BERTH DAY!

That line was under serious consideration for the main blurb on the cover, along with “Let’s give ’em something to talk a boat,” “All hull breaks loose,” “A boatload of tour options” and my favorite, “Increase your sails!”

OK, so maybe they weren’t all under *serious* consideration, but I want you to know what we put ourselves through here in the *Courier* office in order to assemble a magazine that engages and enlightens you. We toss in a few groaners every issue at no extra charge.

I take full responsibility for creating the nautical nightmare of puns and wordplay associated with this issue’s feature on museums, “That ship has sailed,” starting on page 23. And I applaud all 15 members who got on board with the theme when I reached out for information.

One thing I’ve learned about writing is that nearly every project involves parallel parking your thoughts into a space with defined lines: purpose, word count and a cast of characters. If you throw in a theme—sensible or whimsical—the parking space gets a little tighter ... but you feel better about the task when you step out and take a look.

NTA gives us *Courier* writers a fantastic cast of characters to engage. Gabe Webb did just that with an insightful piece about unconventional destination marketing. See what members told him, starting on page 18.

For this month’s City Spotlight, pages 31–34, Pat Henderson took his impressions from a recent trip to Colorado, added in some info from our friends at VISIT DENVER and cooked up a compelling case to do just that: visit Denver.

Kendall Fletcher is part of our destination-coverage crew, and her look at the U.S. Southwest, starting on page 46, makes me want to go to El Paso for a margarita—like, now. We also explore the Great Lakes states, Coastal California and Eastern Europe in this issue.

Tour operators who package parks should turn to page 14, where you can learn about the U.S. National Park Service’s plans to standardize fees and requirements for its commercial use authorization program. Details weren’t available at press time, but you can get them—and make comments on the proposals—through the links we provide.

And last (literally, on page 64), but not close to least, is a piece by the Newseum’s Barbara McCormack, detailing her organization’s determined efforts to help people recognize and reject fake news.

For me, fake news is not the problem. Tortured, walk-the-plank themes ... maybe, yeah.

Read on,

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On the cover:

Cruises on the *San Salvador*, departing from the Maritime Museum of San Diego, include Saturday sails and overnight voyages that are part of the Pacific Heritage Tour series.
Photo: Maritime Museum of San Diego



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EXPERIENCES AND RELATIONSHIPS. Those are the two things I hear about most when talking with you. The client wants an experience that they can only find through a tour operator. And tour operators, DMOs and suppliers want to work with people they trust, people who give them confidence that the product delivered will be the highest quality.

That's what I found when I experienced the new Norwegian Joy—a cruise ship built strictly for the China market. Guests get an experience that they can't receive on any other cruise line, and the company that caters to them maintains a relationship with tour operators who are confident that their clients are getting the highest quality program.

For six-plus decades, NTA members have focused on providing authentic, unique experiences—gained through cultivated relationships. And a distinct benefit of being part of the NTA community is that we're surrounded by experts, so I asked several of our leaders to share their expertise:

What do you see as the greatest near-term growth opportunity for our industry?



"International travel, without a doubt! Brand USA, corporate businesses and our own areas/states partnering with NTA and other organizations will catapult international visitor entry into the USA with all the new promotion and marketing. It's a win-win!"

—Patti A. Culp, Alabama Travel Council
Chair, Advocacy Advisory Group



"As receptive tour specialists for the Northeast, we're seeing growth with smaller, more specialized groups that have specific interests and larger budgets. For these niche groups, we are able to create unique experiences that are not always afforded to larger groups."

—Michelle Pino, Northeast Unlimited Tours
Chair, Member Solutions Advisory Group



"Listening to our guests and building perks around their experiences to build loyalty will continue to be a trend—especially perks that include making the reward systems more useful, valuable and flexible to enhance the overall travel experience."

—Michael Weinberg, Hiltons of Chicago
Chair, Education Advisory Group



"Our industry should remain the champion of international inbound advocacy. We should stay committed to positive communication with overseas guests and travel partners to assure them that America still welcomes the world and is eager to serve them with care and excellence. Together, we can change the conversation!"

—Nathan Claycomb, Sight & Sound Theatres
Chair, Faith Travel Advisory Group



"Emerging inbound Asian markets such as China and India are going to continue to grow quickly. This not only creates opportunities for group tours, but will garner more FIT business as these travelers and tour operators get to know the U.S."

—Melissa McClure, Visit Fairfax
Chair, Young Professionals Advisory Group



"The greatest growth opportunity for people in our industry is continuing to partner with like-minded companies to offer the world to our travelers. Even the most creative, hard-working operators need new, exciting ideas from professionals they can trust."

—Jay Smith, Sports Travel and Tours
Chair, Board of Directors



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COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON

Inman receives Woman in Travel Leadership award

NTA President Pam Inman was named an "Outstanding Woman in Travel Leadership" by Women in Travel and Tourism International at a June 2 luncheon in Washington, D.C. The WITTI awards program is the first of its kind, and Inman is among the first group of honorees.

"It's important to highlight the very significant contributions of women working in travel and tourism today," said Laura Mandala, WITTI founder and CEO of Mandala Research. "These champions of travel and tourism are not only advancing their [organizations] and the industry, but are also mentoring and recruiting the next generation of travel professionals."

Honored along with Inman were Caroline Beteta, president and CEO of Visit California; Angela Brav, chief executive, Europe, InterContinental Hotels Group; Kelly Craighead, principal, Vertimas Consulting, and formerly the first deputy assistant secretary for travel and tourism, U.S. Department of Commerce; Julie Heizer, team lead, U.S. Department of Commerce's National Travel and Tourism Office; Anne Madison, chief strategy and communications officer, Brand USA; and Cathy Tull, senior vice president of marketing, Las Vegas CVA.



WITTI award winners (from left): Cathy Tull, Las Vegas CVA; Anne Madison, Brand USA; Rosemary McCormick, Shop America Alliance; Laura Mandala, WITTI/Mandala Research; Pam Inman, NTA; Caroline Beteta, Visit California; Kelly Craighead, Vertimas Consulting; and Julie Heizer, U.S. Department of Commerce's National Travel and Tourism Office.

"This recognition is a testament to the people and organizations involved with NTA," Inman said. "It also pays tribute to the women who stood with me at this ceremony and to generations of female thought-leaders and risk-takers in our industry."

Saffari joins NTA staff, focuses on faith, Hispanic travel



Kay Saffari recently joined the NTA staff as Faith Travel Association and Hispanic market coordinator. Her hiring underscores NTA's efforts to provide programs and services for members to maximize their business potential in these two key market segments.

Saffari's background includes more than 15 years teaching Spanish at the college level and serving as an interpreter for Kentucky Refugee Ministries, a nonprofit organization that resettles refugees into the Lexington area from all over the world. She has lived abroad and traveled extensively, which she says has helped her appreciate not only her own faith but also the many religions and cultures of the world.

Her goal is to support existing FTA members, enrich the benefits they receive, grow the FTA membership, and build both the faith and Hispanic travel markets in the NTA community. She can be reached at +1.859.264.6603 or kay.saffari@ntastaff.com.

Upcoming Meet-ups set for San Antonio, Charleston, Toronto

Your association will continue its 2017 Meet-up schedule with upcoming gatherings in August and September. Two of the host cities are San Antonio and Charleston, South Carolina, which are the sites of NTA's upcoming Travel Exchange and Contact events, respectively.

San Antonio, Aug. 3 (3:30–5 p.m.) The event takes place at the Visit San Antonio offices. NTA's Katey Pease will look ahead to Travel Exchange '17 (Dec. 14–18) in her presentation, then board member Paul Larsen of Ed-Ventures will lead a Q&A about your association. Cracker Barrel Old Country Store will provide a dessert bar and raffle off a rocking chair.

Charleston, Sept. 12 (2:30–4 p.m.) Explore Charleston will host an afternoon cocktail reception at the Doubletree North Charleston Convention Center. NTA's Catherine Prather will give a presentation, then board member Chris Babb of The Group Tour Company will lead a Q&A.

Toronto, Sept. 14 (10 a.m.–noon) The event will take place at the CN Tower's Maple Leaf Cinema.

If you are interested in attending any of these events, please email headquarters@ntastaff.com.

Plans also are being finalized for a Meet-up in New York City, likely in September. Please watch NTA's *Tuesday* newsletter for more details. ☞



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INSIGHTS ON U.S. LEGISLATIVE ISSUES AND INDUSTRY TOPICS

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A change in Cuba travel

EVER SINCE THE 2016 presidential election, there have been rumblings in Washington and within the tourism industry about how the Trump administration might handle travel to Cuba, which was partially opened by the Obama administration. On June 16, President Trump announced an about-face for significant pieces of Obama's deal with the island nation. The president stopped short of completely reversing the previous administration's Cuba policies, but the announcement did include new travel and commercial restrictions.

While both the Cuban embassy in Washington, D.C., and the American

embassy in Havana will stay open for now, any visits to Cuba by U.S. citizens must be as part of people-to-people travel that is coordinated by tour companies approved by the U.S. federal government. These educational trips must now be taken as part of a group, rather than by individuals. Cruises and flights between the two countries will also continue, although Southwest Airlines has announced the cancelation of two routes, and several other U.S. airlines have either stopped some flights or withdrawn from the market completely.

A major tenet of the Trump administration's policy is the prohibition of any direct transactions with companies

Operators, take note



Michael Zuccato is the general manager of NTA-member Cuba Travel Services in Cypress, California. Asked for his take on the

new travel policy, Zuccato provided three observations, noting that nothing is certain until official regulations are issued.

- U.S. tour operators will need to supply a company representative on each departure.
- Tour operators should ensure that each tour qualifies under the people-to-people category. "That includes a full-time schedule of educational activities that are intended to enhance contact with the Cuban people and that result in a meaningful interaction between the traveler and individuals in Cuba."
- Regarding tours that utilize properties owned or operated by entities related to the Cuban military: "If reservations have been made prior to the regulations being published, they will be permitted to continue as originally scheduled. After the regulations are published, there appear to be prohibitions on certain hotels and services."

For more information, contact Zuccato at michael@cubatravelservices.com or visit the website cubatravelservices.com.



CUBA TRAVEL SERVICES

Travel from the U.S. to Cuba must meet the requirements of "people-to-people" interaction between visitors and the people of Cuba, which can include school children.

controlled by the Cuban military or intelligence services. This may be confusing or concerning for travelers because the Cuban military owns many hotels, villas, tour companies, rental car agencies, gas stations, convenience stores, restaurants and other entities.

While news outlets have reported that hotels will be affected by this prohibition, the administration has not confirmed this. President Trump's Cuba memorandum charged the U.S. State Department with creating a list of prohibited entities.

On top of its impact on people-to-people travel to Cuba, the change might also heavily affect American companies that deal with businesses, shops or hotels owned by the Cuban military. Future business with Cuban military-owned entities might be fully prohibited, but there currently is a lack of clarity about deals already struck between

A major tenet of the Trump administration's policy is the prohibition of any direct transactions with companies controlled by the Cuban military or intelligence services.

American and Cuban military-owned businesses prior to this memorandum.

President Trump's announcement included rhetoric and justification focused on opposition to communism and oppression, and the history of the Castro regime. Despite this rationale, many pro-Cuba trade and travel groups, including Engage Cuba, state that an increase in tourists and trade from the United States has improved Cuban quality of life, creating a stronger Cuban private sector and increasing access to the internet. Engage Cuba is a coalition of private companies and organizations—including NTA—that is working to end the travel and trade embargo on Cuba.

Furthermore, this rollback of Cuban policy will cost the U.S. economy around \$6 billion and affect over 12,000

American jobs, due to changes in how business with the island nation must now be conducted. Following Trump's announcement, Sen. Jeff Flake, a Republican from Arizona, said, "By denying Americans the freedom to travel to Cuba, we will be denying them customers, and they will be worse off."

As the travel and tourism industry grapples with these changes, NTA remains engaged with other travel and tourism associations, pro-Cuba trade

groups and travel coalitions. And NTA is communicating with Congressional offices, relevant departments and agencies in the federal government, and the public with this message: Open access between Cuba and the United States benefits each nation and its people. 📍

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



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BY JULIE P. HEIZER,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE,
NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM OFFICE

MULTIPLE U.S. FEDERAL AGENCIES and their partners take care of the largest expanse of public lands and waterways within the United States, and they work hard to provide fresh information about visitor destinations and experiences. For many international and domestic visitors, these spaces represent new, exciting and unexplored opportunities.

Visitors to public lands and water navigate these destinations on foot or by mountain bike, raft, car, canoe or kayak. And others seek underground and underwater adventures via caving and diving. These breathtaking land and water scenes are always a photographer's delight, and their extraordinary cultural and heritage appeal is equally compelling.

Here are some destination ideas and online resources to help you and your travelers explore the United States and find their next newest adventure.

The Bureau of Land Management/ Department of the Interior

BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land and waters that offer breathtaking landscapes from coast to coast. If there is such a thing as "classic" Western American landscapes, they likely lie within the realm of BLM, which manages more fish, wildlife and plant habitat than anyone in the United States.

Whether you want a slow scenic cruise or an extreme adventure, BLM offers one-of-a-kind experiences with stunning views. Explore those landscapes, one story at a time: bit.ly/2t6fv2i.

Few realize that more than one tenth of BLM lands and waters are part of a relatively young conservation system known as the National Conservation Lands (on.doi.gov/2u5OGsY), most of which are open to hunting and fishing. See National Geographic's National Conservation Lands 15th-anniversary map: on.doi.gov/2sXKzjd. These lands and waters are among America's best-kept secrets.

Groups that explore by bike can check out BLM's top 20 mountain biking locations and interactive trail maps, developed in partnership with the International Mountain Biking Association: on.doi.gov/2tACoop.

BLM preserves our past by managing a tremendous number and wide diversity of cultural heritage resources. You can visit BLM's Cultural Heritage and Paleontology photo album and see extraordinary photos, such as the ancient reptile track from Prehistoric Trackways National Monument in New Mexico. Scroll over each photo to find its location: bit.ly/2uJvqiL.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/ Department of the Interior

USFWS manages a Wildlife Refuge System that offers unique visiting, viewing and learning opportunities focused on wildlife and their habitats. For itinerary ideas, maps, a state-by-state list of wildlife refuges, an events calendar, and information about specific activities, such as birding, fishing, trails, photography and coastal resources go to fws.gov/refuges.

Visitors who enjoy public lands and waters managed by the U.S. Forest Service can find more than 150,000 miles of trails; 10,000 developed recreation sites; 57,000 miles of streams; 122 alpine ski areas; and 338,000 heritage sites.



A campsite beside the
Rio Grande in New Mexico

U.S. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

The U.S. Forest Service/ Department of Agriculture

USFS manages and protects 93 million acres of land encompassing 154 national forests and 20 grasslands in 43 states and Puerto Rico.

Visitors who enjoy these vast and scenic public lands and waters can find more than 150,000 miles of trails; 10,000 developed recreation sites; 57,000 miles of streams; 122 alpine ski areas; 338,000 heritage sites; and specially designated sites that include 9,100 miles of byways, 22 recreation areas, 11 scenic areas, 439 wilderness areas, 122 wild and scenic rivers, nine monuments, and one preserve.

You can help your groups pick a spot, choose an activity and go play. Use the USFS online resource: bit.ly/2t6cCIA.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/ Department of Commerce

NOAA manages an extraordinary National Marine Sanctuary System as part of its overall mission. The system

includes a network of 13 parks that provide idyllic settings for a variety of recreational activities, from diving, fishing, surfing, swimming and kayaking to tidepooling, whale watching and wildlife viewing. Enjoy NOAA's online guide for exploring national marine sanctuaries: sanctuaries.noaa.gov/visit.

For information about where and how to enjoy diving, you can read "Dive into Your Sanctuaries" at bit.ly/2t6ba98.

Or try immersing yourself in the ocean and your national marine sanctuaries without getting wet. The virtual reality voyages—found online at sanctuaries.noaa.gov/vr—use 360-degree images to highlight the amazing habitats, animals and cultural resources your clients can find in each national marine sanctuary. Select which sanctuary you want to visit, scroll through the gallery and click on a panorama to start your dive.

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association

America's public lands and water

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About NTTO

The National Travel and Tourism Office of the U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration manages the Travel and Tourism Statistical System for the U.S. For more information and the latest data, market research, news releases and policy information, visit travel.trade.gov.



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Update: NPS commercial use authorization program

TOUR OPERATORS have been asking questions about the U.S. National Park Service's widely varying processes and the inconsistent fees associated with its commercial use authorization program. Tour companies that operate in more than one park unit expressed frustration and confusion over inconsistencies in CUA fees and a lack of standard requirements.

Hoping to eliminate the confusion, NPS has proposed standardized CUA requirements and an agency-wide fee structure. *Courier* gathered details of the program's history and future in a discussion with Samantha Towery, who coordinates the CUA program for NPS.

Courier: What exactly is a CUA?

Towery: A CUA allows an individual, group, company or other for-profit entity to conduct commercial activities and provide specific visitor services within a national park unit. The National Park Service issues CUAs to manage a wide range of commercial visitor services in addition to road-based commercial tours. Depending on the park, this can include guided mountaineering and backpacking, bike tours, kayak trips, photography workshops, scuba diving classes and fishing trips.

Courier: Why does NPS require CUAs?

Towery: It is illegal to conduct business in a park area without a permit, contract or other written agreement. The National Parks Omnibus Management Act, passed by Congress in 1998, provides NPS the authority to issue CUAs to allow business operations and requires NPS to collect a reasonable fee for CUA administration and management.*

Courier: How does NPS define road-based commercial tours?

Towery: We define road-based commercial tours as one or more persons traveling on an improved roadway on an itinerary that a company or individual has packaged, priced or sold for leisure/recreational purposes. Road-based commercial tours provide no other visitor

services except those incidental to road-based travel in an NPS unit (on-board interpretation and information, and incidental stops at visitor centers, restaurants, wayside exhibits, etc.).

Courier: What are some of the challenges tour operators face?

Towery: NPS has no centralized policies governing the issuance and fee calculation for road-based commercial tour CUAs. We are developing standardized requirements and fees for road-based commercial tours, and we have proposed to implement the standardized process in January 2019. Until the national policy is implemented, parks may continue charging different CUA fees (or no fees at all).



Courier: What lies ahead for the CUA process?

Towery: The National Park Service has already standardized our CUA applications and required reports. And our proposal for standardized road-based commercial tour CUA requirements and fees will be made available at parkplanning.nps.gov/commercialtourrequirements at about the time this issue publishes. The public comment period will end 30 days after the proposal is posted.

Courier: How do tour operators comment on the proposed standards?

Towery: Anyone can review the standards and provide comments at bit.ly/2tVGQTs. Keep in mind that as policy evolves, we will work to ensure that information is up-to-date and accurate. We are committed to keeping open communication channels throughout the process.

Courier: Who needs to acquire the authorization—the tour operator or the motorcoach company?

Towery: One or the other, but not both. The responsibility for obtaining a CUA will fall on the company that packaged, priced and sold the tour. A transportation company would need a CUA only if it also packaged, priced and sold tours directly to consumers. There will likely be exceptions to this rule. For example, it may be impractical to enforce CUA requirements on foreign-based tour companies, and the domestic transportation company may need to obtain a CUA.

Courier: Will parks limit the number of CUAs they approve?

Towery: That depends entirely on each park and the category of CUA. Many parks already establish defined application periods. It is incumbent on tour operators to engage with the park to understand all requirements and deadlines. Operators should visit the NPS CUA webpage (nps.gov/aboutus/commercial-use-authorizations.htm) to access information about the CUA program at specific parks. It's important to note that some parks, including Zion, Arches and Acadia, face intense visitation pressure and have launched visitor use management or transportation planning processes, which may result in new CUA and other visitation limitations. The planning processes provide opportunities for public and stakeholder comment.

*The federal requirement is in 36 CFR 5.3. Also see Public Law 105-391 Section 418. 📍

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The owner became a true believer

NTA member proves value, ROI in attending Travel Exchange

My name is Nita Neasbitt, director of sales for Cliff Castle Casino's new luxury hotel in Camp Verde, Arizona. I've been asked to share my experience as an NTA member, and it's my pleasure to let everyone know what NTA can do for you.

I worked at another hotel before coming to Cliff Castle, and the property was valued at \$3 million when I took it over. The previous manager had no idea about attending the NTA show to increase sales, nor did the owner. I had to do some really tall convincing in order to even attend the convention.

But because of NTA, our annual occupancy went from 50 to 98 percent, and the net operating income was outstanding, all due to the many bus tours we signed from attending NTA every year. In six years of going to Travel Exchange, we went from zero bus companies coming to our property to 41! The owner became a true believer of what NTA can do for a business, and the property sold for \$8.5 million.

In your first year of attending convention, if you walk away with two good accounts, it pays for your trip and is the start of new business. When you get new clients, take good care of them! If you make the guests happy—and the tour director's job easier—they will share that with other tour operators.



Moral to my story: It's a win-win for everyone when you attend Travel Exchange. I was a newbie when I joined and had no idea what an impact NTA was going to play in my success story, but it was amazing indeed.

Todd's trifecta

NTA convention guru gives 3 tips for better appointments



Todd Probus, NTA's member solutions manager, is the authority on appointment scheduling and making the most of your business meetings at Travel Exchange '17. With appointment scheduling set to open Wednesday, Oct. 11, Todd provides three things you should do to maximize your time in San Antonio this December.

1. Register early

The earlier you sign up, the better-matched your appointments will be. You can still get a quality schedule later—and pick up more appointments on-site with our open floor—but the date you register determines when your schedule is created. Being at the front of the line positions you better to get the appointments you want.

2. Update your profile

Your NTA Online profile is what potential appointment partners see when they're determining who to add to their request list. So be sure that your profile is as accurate and informative as possible. Remember that you can add social media links, photos and a logo to your profile—each can help members determine who they want to meet with in San Antonio.

3. More is better

The more appointment requests you make, the higher the number of prescheduled appointments you're likely to get. So try and make the maximum number of possible requests. For tour operators, the max is 40 DMOs and 80 suppliers, while DMOs and suppliers should request the 60 tour operator maximum.



Appointment scheduling for Travel Exchange '17 in San Antonio opens Oct. 11.



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Where: San Antonio, Texas

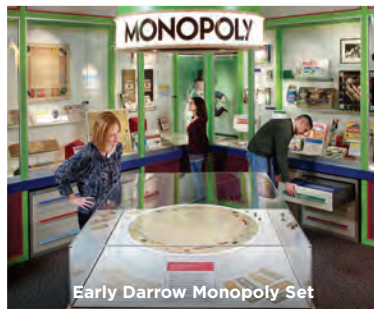
When: Dec. 14-18

Register: NTAonline.com/convention

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Early Darrow Monopoly Set



Dancing Wings Butterfly Garden



Pinball Playfields

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the strong
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF PLAY

The Interview

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS FROM NTA MEMBERS

Share your city with creative content and events

BY GABE WEBB

Prospective travelers want to see experiences that await in a destination. But how can DMOs promote only-in-their-city adventures while successfully sidestepping the traditional pitch? *Courier* reached out to two destinations with wildly different approaches to answering this question.

Spinning the Emerald City into gold



Daniels Ali Daniels is the senior vice president and chief marketing officer for Visit Seattle. Her organization has created several series of short documentaries for social media about Seattle's music, food and visual art scenes, with an emphasis on local voices offering fresh, insider perspectives for potential visitors.

Tell me about a couple of the video projects that Visit Seattle has made and the origins of those ideas.

Ali Daniels: We have produced seven projects so far and are in production of two more. It's hard to choose just a couple to discuss as they are all special in their own way, but let's focus on "Been There, Made That" and "+Play."

"Been There, Made That" started from the idea that Seattle is a place of inspiration. We have an incredible art community here—from fine art to culinary art, and everything in between—and we know that the artists here find inspiration in their surroundings. But it's one thing to get a local's perspective; we wanted to see how visiting artists could be influenced or inspired by Seattle. Each artist—a singer/songwriter, an illustrator, an ice cream maker, a wallpaper designer and a 3D installation artist—traveled to

the Emerald City for a couple days, then returned home to create something in their medium, inspired by their trip.

What resulted is an amazing tale of interpretation. Each one is able to tell a story through their own language, and each one is so special and unique. And these pieces of art live on, all across the country.

On the other hand, we were looking for a different way to showcase the incredible museums and cultural institutions that Seattle has to offer. What if we showed these places off from a different perspective? In "+Play" we did just that. We invited a crew of children to play tour guide in their favorite museums and escort adults to their most cherished spots. The world looks a little different from a child's eye, and we were able to highlight a different side of our arts and culture scene.

What messages about Seattle are you trying to convey with these local-focused videos?

Daniels: Each series is very different and focuses on a theme. We want to show people the many sides of our city—from arts and culture to food, wine and music—and each leans a slightly different way. What you won't find are any "travel-specific" videos. We want to focus on entertainment first, with an underlying travel education thread.

Who is the primary audience for this type of content?

Daniels: Our target audience is the "adventculturalist"—someone that wants

to get every moment [out] of their trip. They want urban, they want nature, they want to see where the locals go, they want to be the first of their friends to try something.

We know consumers are watching more video than ever before and that the "travel cycle" has changed now that technology has advanced so much. By creating entertaining content versus educational content, we can get in front of them even when they aren't in the travel-planning mindset.

This type of content shows a more holistic view of Seattle. We do highlight attractions and iconic spots, but they are paired with some of the unexpected and local spots.

How do you judge the success of a content-driven approach like this?

Daniels: If only we had one big "BOOK SEATTLE" button that all travelers had to push, wouldn't our lives be easier? We measure success a number of different ways. The simplest is engagement: We look at view-through rates, clicks from the video, multiple videos watched. Then we look at data that shows who is looking, booking and traveling to Seattle. We also keep an eye on revenue-per-available-room growth year over year and social sentiment. While not a perfect science, all of those factors help guide us moving forward.

What was one obstacle your organization faced in creating a video series?

Daniels: The biggest obstacle has been letting go of control. When you put your brand in the hands of a stranger, it can be a scary thing, but also a very exciting thing. We have tremendous confidence in our brand, in our city, and the results have been really beautiful.

ArtPrize Pitch Nights: Using Grand Rapids as a grand prize

Dave Nitkiewicz is the specialty market sales manager for Experience Grand



Rapids. His organization has partnered with ArtPrize, an annual arts festival that attracts 400,000 people to the Michigan city, to host Pitch Night events around the country. Think “Shark Tank” for art: Artists from the host communities pitch concepts for large-scale pieces

for designated sites in Grand Rapids. A panel of judges selects a winner who receives a grant to make that artistic vision a reality.

Nitkiewicz and ArtPrize Executive Director Christian Gaines answered our questions about this approach to getting audiences engaged.

What are the origins of the ArtPrize Pitch Night events?

Christian Gaines: It's necessary to create a foundation of understanding that Experience Grand Rapids and ArtPrize work very closely together on lots of things at lots of levels, and Pitch Night is just one of those. As organizations, we work hand-in-hand, which is very much in the spirit of the collaborative approach that people in Grand Rapids have.

ArtPrize Pitch Night is five years old now, and it's really ramped up in the last year or two. It is an idea that captures the entrepreneurial approach that is in keeping with Grand Rapids in a lot of ways.

We wanted to create a program that wasn't only an informational or orientation program around ArtPrize. We wanted to create something with an outcome and a level of excitement that would involve the local arts community and a local partner, but would also be entertaining to someone who was just walking in off the street.

That's how the pitch night concept was born. It's something that moves along pretty quickly, and it's something that has an outcome. One of the artists will win \$5,000 and guaranteed space in Grand Rapids during ArtPrize.

Dave Nitkiewicz: ArtPrize has been a huge driver for visitation for Grand



ARTPRIZE/EXPERIENCE GRAND RAPIDS

Rapids, and we really wanted to share its success with the tourism community more broadly. When we started collaborating, they provided a really wonderful platform for us to get out to our clients in various cities. It's very much an ArtPrize-led event, but our role as the tourism bureau is to be very supportive.

What does planning these events look like for your organizations?

Gaines: Obviously, how we decide which cities we go to is important, and there are a lot of variables there. Do we have a strong cultural partner in that city? Those cultural partners are important to us because they help us source local, industry professionals that are part of the selection panels. They also help us promote the event to the artists who are submitting proposals for consideration, as well as for an audience.

It's an efficient, customized way for us to be able to do something that's turnkey as well as being simultaneously unique city-to-city. It's something we can drop into a city and yield very different results each time.

Nitkiewicz: ArtPrize brings artists from around the country and the world to Grand Rapids, and over the years they've developed those relationships with artists that can ultimately champion this very grassroots approach within their respective communities. Having that local champion really helps.

What I've tried to do is reach out to tour operators who are interested in seeing some of the local art. So, my role there is to bring clients to [their] community-based [Pitch Night] event,

and because it's local, it helps for us to be able to partner with ArtPrize.

It adds value to an ordinary sales call because clients get to meet and learn about five artists in their local community. They attend an event in their own hometown.

I like being able to give them an experience and show the value of Grand Rapids. It takes away the sales pitch. ArtPrize has a memorable community event, and they've been excellent with allowing us to piggyback on that.

What makes these events effective at communicating your organizations' messages?

Gaines: We feel good about our social media presence, and original content is an important part of what we do. One of the great things about every Pitch Night is that it yields original artists and original art, and it's something we can talk about and cover, and our cultural partners can talk about and cover, too. It's authentic, and it relates closely to our mission and guiding principles. You go into [Pitch Night] talking about art, and you come out of it talking about new art.

Nitkiewicz: I think communicating what Pitch Night is, why [guests] should care and the follow-through of getting people to attend has been an obstacle. With that said, we're really starting to polish it. We had way more attend this year than last year, and we hope that trend continues. 📍

This interview has been edited for length and clarity. For more information about Seattle, go to visitseattle.org. For more information about Grand Rapids, go to experiencegr.com.

COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON AND KENDALL FLETCHER

Winter bliss in Bryce

Early each year, Bryce Canyon National Park—in conjunction with Ruby's Inn hotel—puts on the Bryce Canyon Winter Festival. The snow-capped mountains and red-rock canyons of southwestern Utah provide a scenic backdrop to the three-day event, which will take place Feb. 17–19, 2018.

The festival includes a variety of outdoor activities, competitions, classes and demonstrations. Two favorites are ice skating and sleigh rides, while those seeking something a little more active can sign up for the cross-country ski and biathlon races. Other popular options include guided snowshoe treks, a people-powered sled race, cross-country skiing tours, and clinics covering the basics of archery and kayaking.

The list of classroom-style sessions is highlighted by interactive photography and watercolor painting programs. A series of 30-minute ranger-led talks, which in 2017 covered topics such as geology, stargazing, winter in the park and the history of Bryce Canyon, take place at the park's visitor center or at Sunset Point Overlook. There also are special crafts activities, painting classes and wildlife demonstrations for students.

Call +1.435.834.5341 or go to rubysinn.com/bryce-canyon-winter-festival to find out more. —P.H.



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Connect with history in Connecticut

Located in the heart of Wethersfield, Connecticut's largest historic district, the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum includes three quaint 18th-century New England homes.

The Joseph Webb House, built in 1752, was once George Washington's headquarters, where he met with French commander Comte de Rochambeau to plan the joint military campaign that led to the end of the American Revolution. The three-story home was later owned by antiquarian and photographer Wallace Nutting. He sold it in 1919 to The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America, and it became a house museum.

Next door is the Silas Deane House. Deane was an attorney and politician who married Webb's widow in 1763. He was heavily involved in the events that led to the American Revolution and was the nation's first diplomat before dying suddenly in France in 1783. Once the home came into the ownership of the Colonial Dames, the updates that followed reflected the timeframe before Deane left for France in 1776.

Isaac Stevens, the first proprietor of the Isaac Stevens House, was a leatherworker, and his widow's family owned the house for 170 years before it was opened to the public as a museum. The house was built for a middle-class family and provides contrast to the more luxurious Webb and Deane homes. The second floor is now a period toy exhibit.



Museum visitors also can see the Webb Barn and the Colonial Revival Garden, as well as the nearby Buttolph-Williams House.

Museum hours vary by month. Tours are offered every season, and private group tours with receptions and luncheons are available.

To learn more, visit webb-deane-stevens.org or call +1.860.529.0612. —K.F.

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Grape escapes in Slovakia


Slovakia has a rich history of winemaking that dates back hundreds of years, and one of the early centers was the city of Trnava. Located north of the capital city, Bratislava, Trnava boasts a favorable growing climate, and its location along a major trade route helped it develop as a top spot for wine production.

The Trnava Wine Region has become a prime destination for travelers seeking to experience the fruits of the vine in

the western part of the country. As they enjoy tastings and tours at some of the area's award-winning vineyards—Mrva & Stanko Winery, Terra Parna, Karpatská Perla and Vína z Mlyna—groups can also experience the beauty of the quaint towns found throughout the Lower Carpathian mountains.

A number of wine-themed events are held throughout the year, with the main one being Víno Trnava. This weekend festival, which takes place in mid-May in downtown Trnava, brings together thousands of wine lovers for tastings, seminars and a juried winemakers competition.

The autumn months are highlighted by Medieval Pressing (early September) and Open Cellar Day (late October). During Medieval Pressing, the courtyard near the Trnava town hall is abuzz with grape stomping, traditional music and performances detailing scenes from winemakers' lives. Many of the wineries in the city open their cellars one day each year, hence the daylong celebration that takes aficionados into ancient underground rooms for samples and tours.

Call +1.421.2.5070.0846 or go to slovak.travel/en-region-trnava to find out more. —P.H. 



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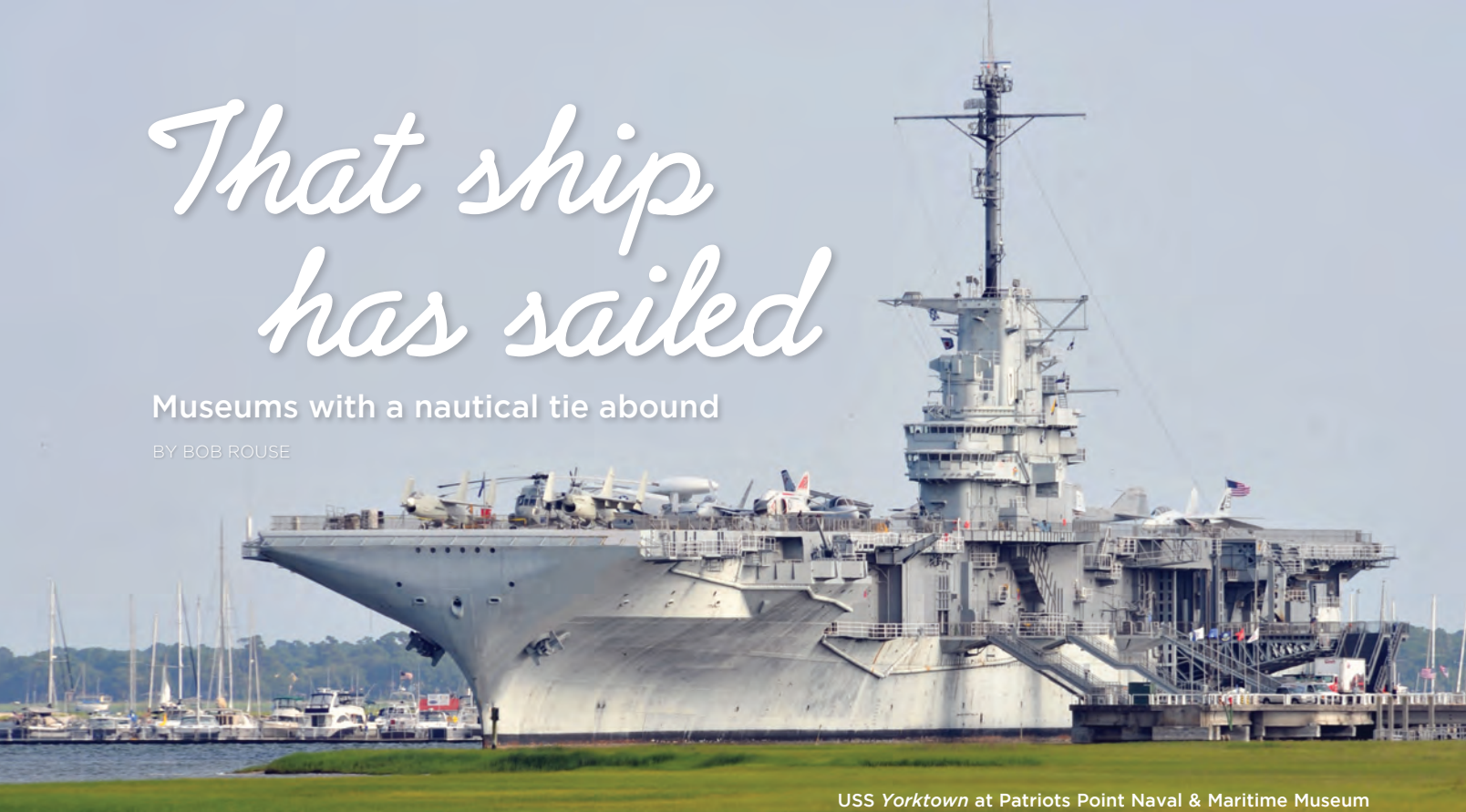


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That ship has sailed

Museums with a nautical tie abound

BY BOB ROUSE



USS Yorktown at Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum

MUSEUMS ILLUMINATE visitors on everything from amphibians to zeppelins. And NTA tour operators are arriving every day.

"We include at least one museum in 95 percent of our tours," says Lydia Griego-Hansen, co-owner of Destination Southwest. "We package our museum visits as exclusive, behind-the-scenes tours to meet the needs of a new generation of travelers who are well-educated and well-traveled."

And many of NTA's member museums—a virtual fleet of them—are related to ships. (We should note that some of the nautical connections are easier to fathom than others.) To get contact information for these—and all—member museums, turn to the guide starting on page 50.



Ship ... duh!

Many member museums are not only related to ships—they *are* ships. And being on board is an enlightening experience for visitors.

"People are fascinated that *Midway* was a floating city at sea—population 4,500—whose average age was only 19," says Scott McGaugh of the USS *Midway* Museum in San Diego. "Only 10 percent of the crew were pilots. Everyone else had city-like jobs below deck to enable the airport (flight deck) to operate."

Authenticity is important, too, says Rhonda Davis of the USS *Alabama* Battleship Memorial Park in Mobile, Alabama. "Our curator and his staff have done a wonderful job interpreting each compartment aboard the battleship and submarine here. When you tour the ships, you get the sense that the crew has just gotten up to go get a cup of coffee."



TED WALTON

The experience of visiting a floating museum can vary by citizenship, according to Keith Snodde of Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York City. "Domestic visitors often feel a connection to the history and legacy that inspires national pride," he says. "Many international visitors don't have the opportunity to visit military ships, which makes a visit to the Intrepid Museum very appealing."

You can use this information to plot a course for museum ships:

Maritime Museum of San Diego is a waterfront museum offering more than 10 historical vessels dockside, plus bay cruises and tall-ship sailing.

All aboard School groups, adult groups, military groups and reunion groups experience 500 years of seafaring history, from sail to steam to submarine. Tours are led by docents who bring history to life through storytelling and re-enactment.

New to port "We have replicated the first vessel to reach America's West Coast, galleon *San Salvador*, and made her available for day sails as well as part of a heritage tour of the California coast, which visits partnering museums and ports," says Dr. Ray Ashley, the attraction's president and CEO.

On the horizon Tall Ship Adventure Active Escapes, with overnight stays aboard the tall ship *Californian*, will include meals, kayaking and wildlife discovery.



A redevelopment of the waterfront location, set for 2018, will include a theater, a restaurant and large-group meeting space. Exhibits opening soon include “Sea Monsters” and “The History of Rum.”

Signaling demonstration aboard the USS *Midway*



USS MIDWAY MUSEUM

USS Midway Museum (San Diego) is a famous U.S. Navy aircraft carrier that is the most-visited historical naval ship museum in the world.

All aboard The self-guided audio tour, available in six languages, describes nearly 70 locations on board and is narrated by *Midway* sailors who lived or worked in each stop on the tour. The attraction has more than 30 climb-in helicopters, cockpits, aircraft, jail cells and crew bunks.

New to port Combat Information Center takes visitors back to Operation Desert Storm. And the Battle of Midway Theater (included with admission) opened a year ago.

Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum

(New York City) houses the aircraft carrier USS *Intrepid*, the world’s fastest jets, the space shuttle *Enterprise* and the only American guided-missile submarine open to the public.

All aboard Both domestic and international groups ranging from students to senior citizens visit the museum. The attraction hosts performing groups from around the world and offers an extensive list of educational programming.

New to port Open through the end of 2017, “Drones: Is The Sky The Limit?” explores the history of drone technology from World War I to its current applications.

On the horizon In 2018, the museum will celebrate the 75th anniversary of *Intrepid*’s commissioning, and former crew members will come from all over the U.S. next summer to celebrate the anniversary.

Pacific Battleship Center



EWASKO.COM

Pacific Battleship Center (San Pedro, California) houses battleship USS *Iowa*, which hosted three presidents (Franklin D. Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush) during nearly 70 years of service.

All aboard Visitors can walk the wood decks and see the ship’s guns, bridge, mess areas and the captain’s cabin, which holds the only bathtub installed on a battleship for a president. Groups can have an on-board picnic or special event.

New to port Guests can now head into the wild blue yonder with “Battleship

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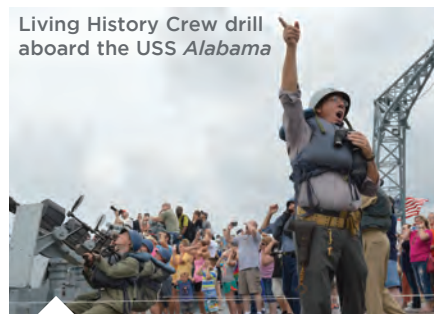


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FLIGHT—A Naval Aviation Experience.” They can also see a restored Korean War-era helicopter, “fly” it through virtual reality and “ride” aboard it on a flight simulator.

On the horizon An Engineering Tour, set to launch later this year, will venture into the ship’s engine room, boiler room and other off-route areas.



USS ALABAMA BATTLESHIP MEMORIAL PARK

USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park (Mobile, Alabama) is home to two National Historic Landmarks, the USS *Alabama* and the submarine USS *Drum*, as well as to the Aircraft Pavilion, which features 28 historical aircraft, military vehicles and memorabilia.

All aboard “Many of our visitors are senior travelers, but we are seeing more and more schools traveling south during their spring breaks, touring historical sites on their way to our pristine beaches,” says Rhonda Davis, director of sales and marketing.

New to port “My favorite recently restored compartment is the operating room of the *Alabama*,” Davis says. “And we have opened a World War I exhibit, ‘The Great War,’ in the Aircraft Pavilion.”

On the horizon Several weekends a year, a uniformed Living History Crew conducts shipboard duties, relates historical stories to visitors and defends the ship during a simulated air attack. Those weekends will start Oct. 7 and Dec. 2, 2017; and Feb. 3, April 14, June 23, Aug. 18, Oct. 6 and Dec. 15, 2018.

Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum (Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina) includes the USS *Yorktown* and two other historical vessels; the Medal of Honor Museum; and the Vietnam Experience Exhibit. The attraction is in the Charleston Harbor, 11 minutes from the Charleston CVB.



JIM VICKERS

All aboard Youth, senior, corporate and military groups can take self-guided tours or have an expert-led tour customized to their interest. Overnight experiences for student groups can include programs in history, marine science and aviation, as well as harbor tours and excursions to Fort Sumter.

On the horizon Annual events at the attraction include Fourth of July fireworks; Veterans Day (Nov. 11), when admission is free for veterans; and a Pearl Harbor Day memorial service on Dec. 7.

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Photo Courtesy of Jonas Sejr Thomsen

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Very shippy

While not actual ships, a boatload of member museums are ship-related in obvious ways.

"Scotland is home to hundreds of brilliant museums, from tiny heritage museums set in traditional crofting homes to facilities with enough room to house a Concorde airplane," says Maggie Anderson of VisitScotland. "And several have a special connection to ships or to maritime memorabilia."

One of those is Riverside Museum, Glasgow's museum of transportation that was named European Museum of the Year in 2013. Berthed outside the striking building that's set on the banks of the River Clyde is the tall ship *Glenlee*, free to enter. Other maritime museums in Scotland are Trinity House Maritime Museum, The Scottish Maritime Museum and Maggie Law Maritime Museum.

Two non-nautical notes: Opening in 2018, The Victoria and Albert Museum of Design Dundee will be the first museum



in Scotland dedicated to design and the only V&A museum in the world located outside of London. And because of interest in the Jacobite story spurred by the "Outlander" TV series, the Prestonpans Battlefield Museum has opened so that visitors can learn about Bonnie Prince Charles' first victory, in 1745.

Another museum that presents a nation's past is the **Canadian Museum of History**, which includes a strong current of ships, says Stephanie Fortin, the attraction's tourism and marketing officer.

"The museum tells 15,000 years of

history on this land, and exploration by rivers and using boats is intertwined throughout," she says. "The First Peoples used boats for transportation, fishing and defense. Later, Vikings and Europeans arrived by ship, and when the Europeans settled, they travelled by canoes and boats to further explore and to trade with First Nations people."

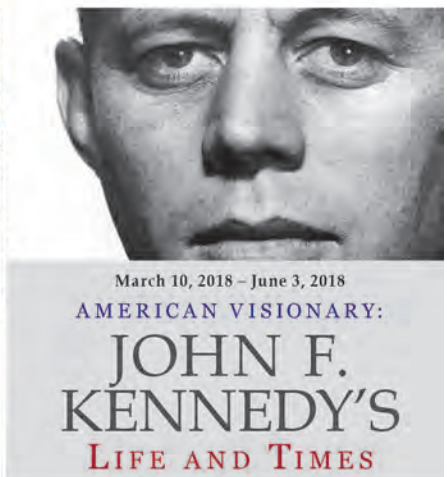
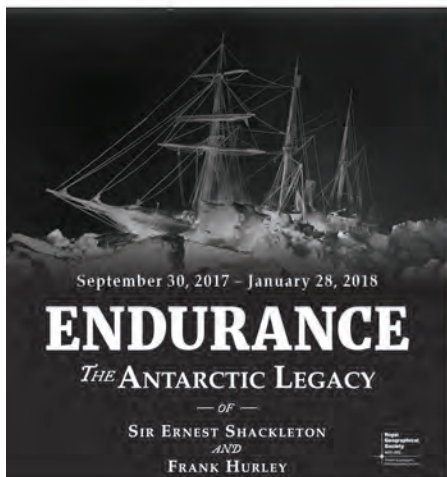
On July 1, the museum, in Gatineau, Québec, opened the Canadian History Hall, which explores the country's history through the perspectives of the diverse people who laid the foundation and who led contemporary struggles that enabled Canada to emerge as a prosperous and independent country.

Groups are learning about a narrower but enormously significant time by visiting the **National World War II Museum** in New Orleans. Because the war was waged on all the Earth's oceans, there are seafaring stories depicted throughout the museum, including exhibits and

EXHIBITIONS
2017 - 2018

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The "Endurance" exhibition has been made possible by the Donald E. and Dorothy Kennedy Fund. Originally presented in the UK by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) as the "Enduring Eye: The Antarctic Legacy of Sir Ernest Shackleton and Frank Hurley." Original sponsors: The United Kingdom Antarctic Heritage Trust, Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, British Antarctic Territory, Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands, Picturae and Rolex UK. "Endurance" at night (side view) by Frank Hurley, 1915 © RGS-IBG. American Visionary: John F. Kennedy's Life and Times is produced by WS Productions in association with the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library. Image credit: Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts, 1957 © Philippe Halsman, (Courtesy Magnum Photos)



The National World War II Museum's restored patrol torpedo boat, PT-305



NATIONAL WORLD WAR II MUSEUM

experiences centered on submarine warfare, the U.S. Merchant Marine and the D-Day beach landings.

New to the museum and its expanding campus is a fully restored patrol torpedo boat that was used by the U.S. Navy in World War II. Anchored 11 miles from the museum campus on Lake Ponchartrain, PT-305 is available to groups for tours, rides and exclusive charters.

The story of the most famous PT boat, captained in World War II by a future U.S. president, is chronicled at the John F. Kennedy Presidential

Library & Museum in Boston. PT-109 was rammed and cut in half by a Japanese destroyer during WWII, and the museum exhibit shares the story of Kennedy and his crew's six-day struggle for survival through journal notes, newspaper clippings and other documents, along with the coconut JFK used to pass a message through enemy lines.

PT-109 was not recovered, but groups visiting the museum May through November can see *The Victura*, JFK's sailboat, displayed in front of the library on a point overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Purchased when he was 15-years-old, this handcrafted wooden boat was sailed by Kennedy the rest of his life.



JFK's sailboat, *The Victura*

JOHN F. KENNEDY LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Ships abound

Not to push the theme too far (but darn close), you could make a maritime case for nearly any museum. Let's take a look at the nautical connections of more NTA-member museums.

The Strong National Museum of Play

Among its comprehensive collection of toys, dolls, games and hands-on activities, this attraction in Rochester, New York, holds a large number of toy ships and boats from multiple eras of American history. The museum's ship-centric activities include a playable giant-sized version of the game Battleship and a full-size fishing boat from the 1950s that is part of an exhibit detailing America's fascination with outdoor sport. And in "Reading Adventureland," visitors set sail on an adventure in the whimsical dragon-headed boat *Courageous*.



THAT KIND OF TALK SINKS SHIPS

Never mention sailing dates, cargoes or destinations to anybody.

INTERNATIONAL SPY MUSEUM

International Spy Museum Located in Washington, D.C., this museum features the largest collection of international espionage-related artifacts ever placed on public display. Spying includes not only tracking down intel, but also the art of misleading foes by planting lies and pushing propaganda. "The well-known phrase 'loose lips sink ships' originated during World War II as part of American propaganda against careless talk," says Lori Scott, the museum's sales executive. Scott also has intel of her own: "In the fall of 2018, the museum will move to a new D.C. location: L'Enfant Plaza, two blocks south of the National Mall."

OLD TOWN MUSEUM

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Salem Witch Museum The focus of this Massachusetts attraction is the famous witch trials of 1692, but the exhibit “Witches: Evolving Perceptions” teaches about the nature of witch hunts by providing more recent examples: the McCarthy Trials, Japanese Internment during World

War II and the ‘80s AIDS epidemic. And the museum’s seafaring connection? It’s a panel dedicated to “swimming a witch,” the reprehensible test for detecting a sorceress by tossing a suspect into the ocean and seeing if she would float (guilty) or sink (innocent).

Corning Museum of Glass New to the Corning, New York, attraction is a glass barge in the Erie Canal. The boat is not made of glass, explains Sally Berry. “It’s a floating hot shop used to blow glass. It commemorates the movement, by barge, of the Brooklyn glass works up to Corning in the 1800s,” she says. “Next year is the sesquicentennial of the Erie Canal, and we’ll provide live, hot-glass-blowing shows all along the canal.” Groups won’t get onto the barge, but the canal is narrow, and the demonstrations will be easy to view from shore.

Museum of Flight Located in the original Boeing Aircraft factory in Seattle, the museum showcases more than 160 airplanes and spacecraft and offers flight simulators, dozens of interactive exhibits and family activities. A new exhibit, “Apollo,” recalls the drama of the 1960s



TED HUETTER

American-Soviet space race to the Moon and will host the Smithsonian Institution’s traveling exhibit “Destination Moon” in spring 2019. And yes, the term “airship” is mentioned throughout the museum’s world war galleries.

While not every museum is a floating repository of knowledge, each holds a cargo of information that visitors are eager to embrace. “Museums play such an important role in a tour,” says Destination Southwest’s Griego-Hansen. “Not only do you hear about history, but you actually get to see it.”



SALEM WITCH MUSEUM



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Canada 150

Denver

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“Denver is the gateway to the Rocky Mountain West, where visitors can experience urban adventures year-round. Three hundred days of sunshine and bright, blue skies inspire people of all ages to get out and explore.”

— Jayne Buck, VISIT DENVER's vice president of tourism

For more information, contact Jenna VanOort, tourism manager for VISIT DENVER, at jvanoort@visitdenver.com or go to visitdenver.com.



EVAN SEMON



VISIT DENVER

Larimer Square

Going walkabout

“Denver is a very walkable city, and the best way to see it is by foot,” says Jayne Buck, vice president of tourism for VISIT DENVER. “Walking tours are a great way to learn about the history, the architecture and the people of Denver from passionate and knowledgeable guides.”

In addition to covering topics such as the city's ubiquitous craft beer culture, its rugged frontier history and its earliest residents, walking tours showcase some of Denver's colorful neighborhoods.

Aspire Tours provides a good introduction to the Colorado capital via its Denver City Overview Tour. Travelers learn the history of Denver and its transformation from a Wild West outpost and boom town into a modern, cultural mecca.

Denver Microbrew Tours offers guided walks in the RiNo (River North) and LoDo (Lower Downtown) neighborhoods. During the tours, participants visit top microbreweries, learn about beer history and taste 10-plus local brews.

The city's founding neighborhood is the focus of the Larimer Square Walking Tour. Guides leading the 90-minute walk detail the area's storied history, which includes its beginning as a bustling city center, its skid row days and its current status as a thriving dining and entertainment district.

Denver Art Museum



JEFF WELLS

The main attraction(s)

Culture lovers will find a lot to their liking in the Golden Triangle area near the state capitol.

“The museums in Denver’s Golden Triangle neighborhood are easy to walk to from downtown hotels,” says Buck. “The History Colorado Center provides an overview of the state’s past, present and future. Across the street, the Denver Art Museum is home to impressive collections of American Indian and Western art.”

History Colorado Center



HISTORY COLORADO CENTER

At the History Colorado Center, which is an NTA member, groups can get a feel for many aspects of life in the Rocky Mountain West. In addition to seeing history-focused exhibits, visitors can enjoy interactive components such as a ski-jump simulator, a virtual ride in a real Ford Model T and a simulated dynamite explosion in a circa-1880’s mine.

Since its founding in 1893, the Denver Art Museum has become one of America’s most significant art institutes west of the Mississippi River. It is home to a number of renowned collections that highlight local and regional works, as well as European, Asian and African art. The sleek architecture of the Daniel Libeskind-designed Frederic C. Hamilton Building is itself a work of art.

Two other attractions Buck recommends, the Byers-Evans House Museum and the Molly Brown House, are located within four blocks of History Colorado. The story of Molly Brown, a noted 20th-century activist and Denver philanthropist, is shared at her namesake residence/museum. At Byers-Evans, visitors can learn about the lives of two of city’s prominent families in the early 1900s.

A natural trio

The downtown area also is home to the following three group-friendly, nature-based attractions:

Denver Botanic Gardens

One of the top five botanic gardens in the U.S., Denver Botanic Gardens is an oasis in the city. Groups can explore the different styles of gardens and enjoy year-round special events such as the Lavender Festival, the Pumpkin Festival, the winter market and the summer concert series.

The Denver Museum of Nature & Science

For more than 100 years, the attraction has showcased the fascinating world of science. Visitors can learn more about the cosmos, view precious minerals and gems, see massive dinosaur skeletons, check out planetarium and IMAX shows, take part in educational sessions and more.

The Denver Zoo

The zoo is home to more than 4,000 animals representing 650 species, including everything from Asian elephants and African lions to Komodo dragons and lowland gorillas. Interactive animal encounters, zookeeper sessions, teen volunteer programs and student overnight stays are popular.



Denver Museum of Nature & Science

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Garden of the Gods Park & Pikes Peak

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Off to market we go

Buck says another tasty way to connect with her city and its foodie culture is to visit local markets such as Avanti F and B, Denver Central Market and The Source.

“Denver’s dining and craft beverage scene is hot. Our new marketplaces showcase the creativity and passion of local restaurateurs, brewers, bakers and more. They are a one-stop shop for visitors to taste local flavors.”

Situated in the Highlands neighborhood, Avanti F and B is modern food hall that draws inspiration from both Old World markets and food trucks. Its seven restaurants are housed in repurposed shipping containers, and they provide a diverse set of dining experiences based on creative and affordable cuisine.

Denver Central Market brings together an eclectic blend of 11 restaurants. During a visit to this RiNo Arts District hot spot, patrons can enjoy a cocktail from Curio Bar and choose from a wide array of options, such as meals at Silva’s Fish and the Local Butcher as well as treats from Izzio Bakery and Temper Chocolate.

Another RiNo staple and top gathering place for the culinarily curious is The Source. Located in an iconic 1880s ironworks building, it is a European-style artisan food market that includes everything from a butcher and a produce vendor to a cheese shop and a taqueria.



Avanti F and B

VISIT DENVER



Denver Central Market

VISIT DENVER



The Source

ADAM LARKEY




Colorado Springs' Garden of the Gods

PAT HENDERSON

Worth a road trip

It's hard to imagine visiting Denver and not experiencing the great outdoors. Two nearby destinations that offer prime back-to-nature exploration are Rocky Mountain National Park and Colorado Springs.

Located 90 minutes northwest of Denver, the park protects thousands of species of flora and fauna that can be found in its subalpine and alpine ecosystems. A record 4.5 million visitors enjoyed ranger-led programs, guided tours, hiking, wildlife and night-sky viewing and more at the park last year.

With Pikes Peak as its calling-card, Colorado Springs blends big-city amenities with the laid-back feel of a quaint mountain town. Must-dos in the area include checking out Garden of the Gods—first stop is the state-of-the-art visitors center (gardenofgods.com)—and taking a ride on the Manitou and Pikes Peak Railway (cograilway.com) to the famous mountain's 14,115-foot summit. Contact Floy Kennedy of the Colorado Springs CVB at floy@visitcos.com to learn more. 



IGOR BRAUTOVIC/DUBROVNIK TOURIST BOARD

The Pearl of the Adriatic: On cruises of coastal Croatia, travelers can experience the country's islands and port towns, including the historical Old City of Dubrovnik. To read more about travel to Eastern Europe, turn to page 50.

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Coastal California

COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON

Whale watching at Monterey Bay



CC FLICKR/DOUGLAS CROFT: bit.ly/2HhDr

Whales and trails in Monterey

"Monterey County features nature at its best," says Tammy Blount, president and CEO of the Monterey County CVB. "The spectacular scenery includes 99 miles of stunning Pacific surf, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, enchanting forests, majestic redwoods, sprawling vineyards and beautiful beaches.

In addition to checking out the area's signature spots—Monterey Bay Aquarium, Cannery Row, the scenic 17-Mile Drive and the beaches of Carmel—groups can enjoy a range of nature-based experiences such as whale watching, kayaking, hiking, horseback riding and scuba diving.

The presence of several species of whales along the county's coastline makes nature cruises a favorite of visitors. During sightseeing excursions, gray whales, blue whales, orcas and humpbacks, as well as thousands of dolphins, are often spotted near Point Piños and Monterey Bay.

"From whale watching year-round to bird watching to viewing seals during pupping season, there are also a number of ways to view wildlife up close and personal," adds Blount.

Kayak tours on Monterey Bay and Elkhorn Slough offer a memorable way to have those types of close encounters. Whether travelers go on guided excursions or rent a kayak and paddle on their own, they can see harbor seals, otters, sea lions, whales, pelicans, sandpipers, loons and more.

The county also is home to hundreds of miles of great hiking trails. Visitors can discover many aspects of the area's natural beauty as they walk through Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park's redwood groves, birding hot spots in Pinnacles National Park, the forests of Point Lobos State Natural Reserve and Point Sur Lightstation's volcanic terrain.

Contact the CVB's David Cater at dcater@seemonterey.com or go to seemonterey.com to find out more.

Horseback riding at Moss Landing State Beach



SEEMONTEREY.COM

Point Lobos State Natural Reserve



SEEMONTEREY.COM

Update on the Pacific Coast Highway

Winter storms forced closures along the Pacific Coast Highway in the Big Sur area south of Monterey. While Big Sur and a number of other places along the Central Coast are open, parts of the scenic highway, including the section from Pfeiffer Canyon Bridge to Ragged Point, are currently closed. Status updates are available from the Monterey County CVB at seemonterey.com/resources/travel-alert.

Beyond Silicon Valley in Santa Clara

Located in the southern section of the San Francisco Bay Area, Santa Clara is the center of Silicon Valley. According to David Andre, vice president, marketing and communications for the Santa Clara CVB, groups can learn more about tech history, as well as explore other aspects of the city's rich history. He recommends these group-friendly attractions:



Intel Museum

Intel Museum

Travelers can experience high-tech up close at the Intel Museum. Hands-on exhibits show how silicon chips are made and chronicle technological innovations through the years that changed the world. Student groups can enjoy a number of hands-on programs, tailored for specific grade levels, in the attraction's state-of-the-art Learning Lab.

Triton Museum of Art

The attraction features rotating exhibits and has permanent displays of 19th- and 20th-century American art. Visitors also can view the museum's extensive collection of Native American tribal artifacts and explore the sculpture garden and grounds.

Mission Santa Clara de Asis

This Santa Clara mission, which can be discovered on self-guided walks, is the eighth of 21 missions built in California. Founded in 1777 by Franciscans, the mission and surrounding gardens are located on the campus of Santa Clara University.

Levi's Stadium and the 49ers Museum

During tours, guides detail the football stadium's innovations, such as the recycled-water irrigation system that feeds the playing surface and the solar terraces above the suites. At the 49ers Museum, visitors see exhibits covering the history of the San Francisco 49ers.

For more information, contact Andre at david.andre@santaclara.org or go to santaclara.org.



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Hearst Castle

SLO ride, and take it easy

“San Luis Obispo County—or SLO CAL as we call it—really offers groups a nice variety of destinations and experiences in a compact, easy-to-navigate location,” says Michael Wambolt, director of travel trade for Visit SLO CAL. “From any of our small cities or coastal towns, you are a short drive to beaches; wildlife viewing; world-class, yet approachable, wineries; and arts.”

In addition to recommending a drive down the Pacific Coast Highway, Wambolt suggests the following attractions and experiences for groups heading to his county:

Hearst Castle The home of William Randolph Hearst, which is perched above the ocean, showcases the entrepreneur’s renowned art collection. The castle features primarily European art, which is complemented by Mediterranean Revival architecture and acres of lush gardens.

The Great American Melodrama & Vaudeville Since 1975, this local theater company has been delighting audiences. A two-act play opens the evening, and it’s followed by a Vaudeville-style revue that mixes singing, dancing and comedy.

Spanish missions Two 18th-century missions—San Luis Obispo de Tolosa and San Miguel Archangel—are located in the county. Founded in 1772, Tolosa features authentic relics and examples of Chumash crafts, as well as many early photographs. San Miguel is known for its well-preserved murals and frescos.

Covell’s California Clydesdale Ranch This incredible coastal ranch is home to roughly 100 Clydesdale horses. During a visit, groups see how the Clydesdales live like wild horses, and they tour more than 2,000 acres of pristine Monterey Pine forest and rolling pastures overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Farmers markets “It’s hard to beat farm-to-table dining, and you’ll likely bump into SLO CAL’s chefs at any one of our 13 year-round farmers markets,” says Wambolt. “Beyond local citrus, avocados and nuts, you’ll discover locally made craft goods, lavender soaps, baked goods and even live music performances.”

Wildlife San Luis Obispo County is a prime destination for wildlife viewing. Travelers can spot migrating gray whales and rare birds along the shoreline and watch as elephant seals gather and mate along the northern coastline of Piedras Blancas. Another popular spot is Pismo State Beach, which is the wintering grounds for thousands of migratory Monarch butterflies.

To learn more, contact Wambolt at michael@visitsanluisobispocounty.com or go to visitsanluisobispocounty.com.



San Miguel Archangel



Farmers market

VISIT SLO CAL

Bartell Hotels' Pacific Terrace Hotel



BARTELLHOTELS.COM

San Diego's super suppliers

The calm Pacific waters and palm trees along the Southern California coast provide a scenic backdrop to urban San Diego. In addition to the San Diego CVB being a great resource (sandiego.org), tour operators can reach out to the following five NTA supplier members to enhance their itineraries:

Bartell Hotels

NTA contact: Dana Irby | bartellhotels.com

For nearly 50 years, Bartell Hotels has provided a gateway to San Diego's most unforgettable destinations: Pacific Beach, La Jolla, Mission Bay and Mission Valley. The family-owned company has eight properties throughout the area, each offering unique décor and stylish amenities.

Embassy Suites San Diego-La Jolla

Brittany Anestad
sandiegolajolla.embassysuites.com

The resort, set just minutes from the beautiful seaside village of La Jolla, offers luxurious two-room suites. Guests can enjoy delicious continental cuisine at Indulge Restaurant and Lounge, and the hotel also offers a complimentary made-to-order breakfast and free nightly reception.

Flagship Cruises & Events/ San Diego Harbor Excursions

Scot Rockman | flagshipsd.com

Since 1915, Flagship Cruises has offered excursions showcasing the San Diego

scenery from the water. Daily tours include a narrated sightseeing excursion, an evening dinner cruise and the Patriot Jet Boat thrill ride. Weekly and seasonal rides also are available, such as the popular summer whale and wildlife viewing cruise.

Maritime Museum of San Diego

Warren Potts | sdmaritime.org

The attraction is home to an outstanding collection of historical ships, including the world's oldest active ship, the *Star of India*. Groups can check out exhibits and board some of the ships as part of daily tours. The museum also is well-known for its excellence in restoring, maintaining and operating historical vessels.

USS Midway Museum

Joe Wagstaff | midway.org

During a visit to the USS Midway Museum, travelers can explore the attraction's more than 60 exhibits and its collection of 29 restored aircraft. The self-guided audio tour, narrated by sailors who served on the *Midway*, brings the carrier's history to life. Guests also can enjoy two flight simulators. 🎧

Flagship Cruises' Spirit of San Diego



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Great Lakes

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Cruise into The Henry Ford

Because of The Henry Ford's enormous size (250 acres), scope (300 years of history) and content (26 million artifacts), you might take on the Dearborn, Michigan, attraction in manageable sections:



THE HENRY FORD

A Model T ride in Greenfield Village

Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation Highlights include the Kennedy limousine, the Lincoln rocking chair and the Rosa Parks bus. Guests can see the aircraft exhibit, step inside the circular Dymaxis House and explore the 600-ton Allegheny Locomotive.

Greenfield Village Check out the lab where Thomas Edison had his lightbulb moment, visit the Wright brothers' workshop and take a ride in a real Model T.

Ford Rouge Factory Tour Absorb the awe-inspiring scale of the factory floor where the Ford F-150 is built.

"The best value for our tour operators is the 'All-American Package,' which includes admission to the museum, village and factory tour," says Vickie Evans, senior account representative. "You also get unlimited rides on the Model T, steam locomotive, horse-drawn carriage and 1913 carousel."

For more information, contact Evans at vickiee@thehenryford.org or visit thehenryford.org.

Vikings to invade Eagan

The folks in Eagan, Minnesota, have their eyes on 2018. In March, the Minnesota Vikings will open a new headquarters, training facility and outdoor stadium in their city.

"We're very excited for this development to be right here in Eagan," says Denise Olson of the Eagan CVB. "The Vikings have never had a hall of fame, and that will be part of the new facility. Our goal is that groups will be able to tour it year-round."

The stadium and headquarters are part of a larger project that will eventually include hotels, shopping and an entertainment complex.

Eagan is already on the map for shoppers. Its Twin Cities Premium Outlets is adding new stores, and the city is a 15-minute drive from the Mall of America, an NTA member.

"We love groups," Olson says. "And when you stay in Eagan, every person in the group gets a great Eagan gift bag with coupons and fun stuff."

For more info (and fun stuff), contact Olson at denise@eaganmn.com or visit eaganmn.com.



EAGAN CVB



John G. Shedd Aquarium

©CLAYTON HAUCK

Getting on board in Chicago

Three Chicago attractions are sailing along with the nautical theme for this issue's museum feature on page 23, but they are docked here instead.

Chicago Architecture Foundation

Inspiring guests to discover why design matters, CAF showcases the buildings, neighborhoods and river that make the city famous. The organization's 85 tours are conducted by bus, bike and L train; on foot and on Segway; and yes, by boat. Contact Deb Rodak at groupstours@architecture.org.

John G. Shedd Aquarium

At the largest indoor aquarium in the world, visitors can see more than 8,000 aquatic animals, including beluga whales and Pacific white-sided dolphins in the Oceanarium, warm-water species in the Caribbean Reef and dozens of denizens in "Wild Reef: Sharks at Shedd." Contact Brad Martin at bmartin@shedd-aquarium.org.

The Museum of Science and Industry

With 14 acres to explore, guests can enter a working coal mine, walk inside a 30-foot tornado and sync heartbeats with a 13-foot heart. Daily programming includes costumed interpretation, science demonstrations and learning labs. And what's watery? U-505, the only German submarine in the U.S. Contact Amy Tometich at amy.tometich@msichicago.org.



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COMPASS GREAT LAKES

Look back, look forward to southern Indiana

The adjoining resort communities of French Lick and West Baden, Indiana, have been welcoming guests for more than 100 years to National Landmark properties and unique spas. And while “spa” sounds relaxing, don’t let your clients snooze on area activities that include golf, casino gaming, nature cruises, chainsaw carving (!) and up-close encounters with elephants and giraffes.

The French Lick Resort was recently named the Best Historic Resort by Historic Hotels of America, and there’s more of the past to explore nearby, according to Kristal Painter with Visit French Lick West Baden.

“We partner with Corydon, as that town’s history complements ours,” Painter says. “And there’s loads of grand architecture in southern Indiana, including the Monastery of Immaculate Conception in Dubois County and Saint Meinrad

French Lick Springs Hotel



VISIT FRENCH LICK WEST BADEN

Archabbey in Spencer County.”

Groups can fly into Indianapolis, Louisville or Chicago and tour Indiana from top to bottom. “We’re a part of the Indiana Treasures Tour, and it’s divided up into northern, central and southern Indiana,” says Painter, who represents the southern tier. “Three DMOs formed a partnership, which makes it easier for operators to plan a tour.”

When you’re ready to start planning, email Painter at kristal@visitfrenchlickwestbaden.com or go to visitfrenchlickwestbaden.com.

Sharpen your senses for Cleveland

Be prepared for sensory indulgence in Cleveland. At the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, you’d expect to be all ears for a journey down a musical memory lane, and this NTA-member museum delivers.

“A major new production opened in July,” says Jane Tougouma, Destination Cleveland group tour sales manager. “The Power of Rock Experience’ features a three-stage exhibit with new interactives and a film by Academy Award-winning filmmaker Jonathan Demme.”

The attraction’s café also has a new look—plus fantastic flavors provided by

Cleveland chefs Jonathon Sawyer and Rocco Whalen.

The Hall doesn’t have a monopoly on music, though. Groups can listen to live music—and perform—at venues and music festivals throughout the Cleveland area, including Severance Hall, Cedar Point Amusement Park and the Great Lakes Science Center.

Through September 2018, visitors can get an eyeful of art during “FRONT International Cleveland Exhibition for Contemporary Art,” with pieces from more than 50 local, national and international artists displayed at 12 regional venues.

Tougouma stands ready to help operators make Cleveland part of a program that can include Columbus, Ohio’s Amish country, Niagara Falls and others destinations. “We provide free group tour services to help you put together the perfect Cleveland experience.”

You can email Tougouma at jtougouma@destinationcle.org or get more information at thisiscleveland.com/groups.



A student band at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame

CODY YORK PHOTOGRAPHY

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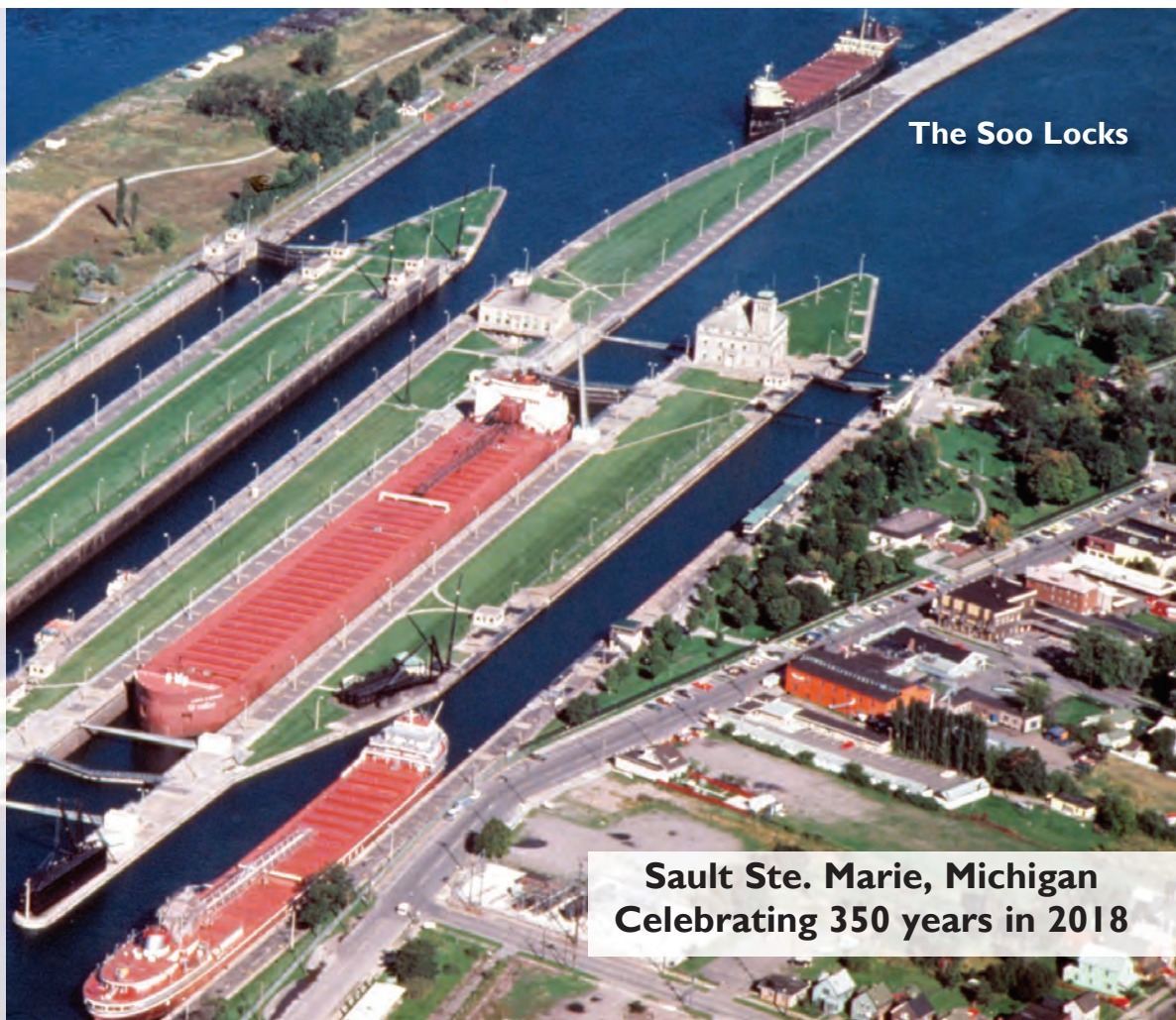
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The Soo Locks

**Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan
Celebrating 350 years in 2018**

Wisconsin cheese, history ... and jelly beans

If you're scouting out the Milwaukee area leading up to Travel Exchange '18 next November, be sure to build in a visit to Kenosha, located between Milwaukee and Chicago.

Groups can discover the variety of flavors—and some candy-making secrets—at the Jelly Belly Visitor Center, which offers a free train ride through the distribution facility. The center recently added new videos, display screens and an updated audio system for the tour, and interactive components will debut this fall.

Another food-themed attraction is the Mars Cheese Castle, which doubled in size this year. The cheese shop opened in 1947 in a renovated schoolhouse, and it has evolved into the distinctive castle visitors now see.

The Kenosha Area CVB has itinerary suggestions for shoppers (featuring Pleasant Prairie Premium Outlets) and history buffs. The two-day Feeling Museumical itinerary includes visits to the Civil War Museum, Kenosha History Center and the Dinosaur Discovery Museum, and a ride on an authentic electric streetcar that connects guests to sites in the historical district.

See more of the city at visitkenosha.com or contact Eva Hoey at eva@visitkenosha.com.



KEVIN POIRIER



On the move in Green Bay

Fall and football season take on enormous significance in Green Bay, Wisconsin (home of the NFL's Packers), but groups can enjoy attractions and activities away from the gridiron.

You can, um, kick off your visit at The Automobile Gallery, which features more than 50 vehicles of distinction, from a 1917 Milburn Electric to a 1981 DeLorean and a 2015 Cadillac CTS-V. The attraction is the vision of local car enthusiast Red Lewis.

"He dreamed of converting a Cadillac dealership in downtown Green Bay into a gallery featuring the car as art," says Cameron Teske, marketing manager at the Greater Green Bay CVB. "Each car is displayed with its own storyboard to help you understand and appreciate the impact and beauty of the automobile."

Another transportation gem is the National Railroad Museum, where guests can explore the train car used by Dwight D. Eisenhower during World War II; meet Big Boy, the world's largest steam locomotive; and inspect a variety of railroad memorabilia.

And going from the rails to the waterway, groups can board the River Tyme for a Fox River Tours cruise. Themed excursions and private charters are available.

For more info on Green Bay, contact Julie Gerczak at julie@greenbay.com or go to greenbay.com. 



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Southwest U.S.

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It's arty time

Every corner in Oklahoma City provides an opportunity for enrichment.

"Oklahoma City's rugged Western heritage and Native American past, paired with the modern metropolis it is today, gives visitors everything they'd want in experiencing arts and culture," says Sandy Price, vice president of tourism with Visit Oklahoma City. "This includes everything from festivals and live music to art and culture at one of our premier museums around town to an entire district dedicated to the arts."



JANA CARSON



MUTZ PHOTOGRAPHY



VISITOKC.COM

See the ballet

The Oklahoma City Ballet is home to 45 dancers from all over the world. Each season the company presents a combination of contemporary and classical ballets through its four mainstage productions. Some of the upcoming performances include "The Nutcracker" in December and "Petite Mort: A Triple Bill" in April 2018.

Hear the music

Visit the Civic Center Music Hall downtown to see the Oklahoma City Philharmonic. The company puts on performances September through May in a series of eight concerts of classics and six pairs of pops concerts. Upcoming performances include "The Songs of Elton John" in February 2018 and "Pink Martini" in March 2018.

Experience the art

Oklahoma City is teeming with art galleries and museums, including The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum; the Paseo Arts District; the Oklahoma City Museum of Art, which is located downtown and houses rotating and permanent exhibits, including a collection of Dale Chihuly glass pieces (shown above); and Exhibit C, a new downtown gallery featuring works by Chickasaw artists.

For more information, contact Price at sprice@visitokc.com or go to visitokc.com.

Night at the opera

The Santa Fe Opera offers preview dinners for guests at its Dapples Pavilion before each evening's performance.

Surrounded by the opera's gardens, visitors dine beneath a large canopy with sunset views to the west and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the east. The menus are ever-changing, but always include a farm-to-table buffet, wine selections, coffee and dessert. Groups are seated together at reserved

tables, and complimentary round-trip shuttle service is available between the theater parking lot and Dapples Pavilion.

Groups can also tailgate before the shows. They can set up tables in the parking lot and purchase tailgate dinners online, hire caterers or bring their own food.

The Opera, established in a state-of-the-art open-air theater, has commissioned and produced many new American operas, beginning with "The Tower" in 1947. With 14 world premieres under its belt, the Opera debuted another in 2017: "The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs."

The 2018 season has been freshly slated and tickets are currently for sale.

"It will be our 62nd year and include a very diverse repertory," says Kathy Prenevost, the Santa Fe Opera's group sales and advertising manager. "I personally think groups will enjoy 'Madame Butterfly.' It's a beautiful opera, and (they) will recognize the music. 'Dr. Atomic' will be interesting and exciting since the atomic bomb was developed at Los Alamos National Labs, our neighbor."

The 2018 season also includes "Candide," "The Italian Girl in Algiers" and "Ariadne Auf Naxos."

To learn more, contact Prenevost at kmurphy@santafeopera.org or visit santafeopera.org.



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Mix it up in El Paso

El Paso, Texas, is the birthplace of the margarita. Best news ever? Si!

Visit El Paso has concocted a trip idea that takes visitors to the best places in the city to try the signature drink.

"The margarita is a part of El Paso's history and pairs well with our truly authentic Mexican food," says Leesy McCorgary, digital marketing manager with Visit El Paso. "Each of the restaurants I can suggest are well suited to host large groups with advance notice. The restaurants are locally owned and operated and known as favorites among the locals."

Visitors looking for an award-winning margarita with some extra tequila should visit Carlos & Mickey's, where they can order the Texas-Sized Margarita—a margarita so big, it's limited to just one per customer.

The Chamoyada is a ruby-hued margarita served up at Barrigas Restaurant. The drink is blended with tequila, Chamoy and Cointreau and trimmed with Tajín seasoning.

Ever tried a margarita with a kick? Julio's Café Corona boasts an extensive selection of margarita flavors and combinations, including the jalapeno margarita that's made with tequila, cilantro and jalapenos.

Another popular option is the classic margarita at L&J Café, a local landmark known for delicious food and no-frills margaritas. If you want the frills, though, stumble down to Cantina Malolam and order the Mint Jamaica Margarita, mixed with hibiscus, mint and fresh limes.

For more El Paso trip ideas, contact McCorgary at lmccorgary@destinationelpaso.com or go to visitelpaso.com.



DESTINATIONELPASO.COM



Barrigas Restaurant's Chamoyada

BARRIGAS.COM

The sundown lowdown

When the hot Arizona sun sets, the fun begins.

"Phoenix is known for its sunshine and stellar sunsets.

What many don't think about is what to do after the sun goes down," says Trish Lanteigne, Visit Phoenix's media relations manager. "The desert—especially in the summer—comes alive at night, providing a really unique experience for groups. It's just another way that Phoenix might surprise you."



CC FLICKR/BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT: bti1y/ZsmGza6

Some of the nighttime tours offered in or near Phoenix include the following:

Full moon hike in Spur Cross

Hiking by moonlight at Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area leaves visitors with knowledge of the conservation area, fun facts about the moon, and an illuminating lesson on the sounds and smells of the desert after dark.


Moon Rise Tours with Arizona Territorial Adventures

Jeep tours through the Sonoran Desert show travelers the raw colors of an Arizona sunset and, once the sun goes down, the silhouettes of giant saguaro cacti against the fading sky. Tours are offered June through October two days before and during a full moon, and two days after.

Night tours with Stellar Adventures

Stargazing Participants are transported by SUV and are led by a professional astronomer. They observe Jupiter, its moons and eclipses, stars and lunar mountains, and canyons and craters by telescope.

Night vision The desert comes to life at night, and groups can experience the emerging nocturnal wildlife. Group members are provided state-of-the-art night vision devices and are driven through the Sonoran Desert in search of desert dwellers.

For more information on nighttime tours, contact Lanteigne at tlanteigne@visitphoenix.com or go to visitphoenix.com. 



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Groups will find affordable group-friendly hotels, attractions, professional sports, restaurants, shopping and much more in Houston, the Culinary and Cultural Capital of the South.

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For itinerary suggestions and group pricing contact us at grouptours@visithouston.com.

For more information on THINGS TO DO while in Houston visit our website at visithouston.com/things-to-do.

4

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10K+

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VISITHOUSTON

Eastern Europe

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See Slovakia from tajch to bottom

"Slovakia is a small country in the heart of Europe," says Marcela Lauková, managing director of Discover Slovakia Tours. "And short travel distances allow you to see a lot in a short time."

Many Discover Slovakia itineraries have an agritourism focus, including the long-time NTA member's most popular trip, Explore Eastern Europe. Over the course of 13 days, travelers will see the region's major cities such as Prague, Krakow, Bratislava and Budapest. They will also visit rural farms and learn about raising livestock and go to historical breweries, as well as explore the beauty of the High Tatras mountains.

Lauková says the company is deepening its agricultural tours. "We can now provide a very technical agriculture program in the Balkans: Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro. We also offer a new program connected to a Danube river cruise, where we offer agricultural day trips instead of the regular cultural visits."

In addition to featuring eastern Europe's agricultural output, Discover Slovakia's tours showcase its home country's UNESCO-listed sites. "There are five cultural and two natural UNESCO sites located in the small area of Slovakia," says Lauková.

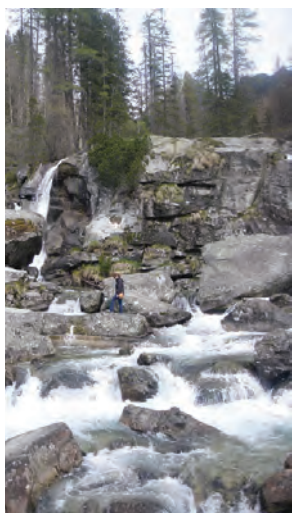
The town of Banská Štiavnica and its nearby mines and reservoirs (tajchs) have been recognized for their historical value. The city thrived as a mining center during the Renaissance, and the flourishing economy led to the construction of beautiful palaces, churches and castles. The surviving mineshafts and tunnels are recognized for their technical achievement for their era.

"Nowadays, the city is described as the Soho of Slovakia," says Lauková, "with a rich concentration of arts and more than 60 tajchs."

For 2018, Discover Slovakia plans to expand its specialty group tour themes. Lauková says the company has seen increased interest from groups looking for performance opportunities, historical sites and active travel.

"Our very first bike group from the U.S. will arrive in the autumn and will have a six-day biking program in Slovakia and the Czech Republic," she says.

To learn more, contact Lauková at mlaukova@discoverslovakiatours.com or go to discover.slovakiatours.com.



DISCOVER SLOVAKIA TOURS

Clockwise from top: Bratislava Castle, Cold Creek Waterfalls in the High Tatras mountains, Spiš Castle, choir in Hronsek

Katarina Line celebrates 25 years of sailing

Katarina Line offered its first small-ship cruise of the Croatian coast in the early '90s, and as the company celebrates 25 years, its marketing director Daniel Hauptfeld reflects on its success.

"We are clearly market leaders in Croatia for small-ship cruises, but it didn't come easy," he says. "Together with our captains, we have set our standards for different ship types, helped develop new categories of ships, and helped build new and modern ships, while still keeping the traditional Croatian originality."

Today, Katarina Line uses 52 ships for its itineraries, and it offers an ever-expanding catalogue of land and sea packages. Its seven-night Southern Explorer cruise is its most popular itinerary.

"[It] covers all the must-sees for someone traveling to Croatia for the first time—Split, Hvar, Korcula and Dubrovnik are the highlights ... but in the seven nights we also visit Makarska, a famous beach riviera; Trstenik on the Peljesac Peninsula, famous for wine; and the National Park Mljet."

Another frequently requested option is the nine-day Croatian Rhapsody land tour. The itinerary starts in Zadar and finishes in Dubrovnik, and it combines the country's natural beauty of the UNESCO-listed Plitvice Lakes with gastronomic experiences, including truffle tasting in Istria and fresh oysters in Ston.



KATARINA LINE

For 2018, the company is adding a new one-way cruise between Opatija to Dubrovnik as part of its guaranteed departures. The cruise will visit Rab Island, Zadar, Split, Korcula and the estuaries of the Krka and Neretva rivers, and it will be offered on Katarina Line's newest and most luxurious vessels, which make up its Deluxe Superior ship designation.

"Everyone is welcome in Croatia, and you can feel it on every corner," says Hauptfeld. "Croatia's nature is still untouched, and the whole coastline and our islands seem like a national park. Still, the people make the country."

For more information about Katarina Line, contact Katia Hauptfeld at info@katarina-line.hr or go to katarina-line.com.

Roundabout takes travelers straight to the heart of Slovenia

"Slovenia is committed to sustainability, which can be seen in every corner: how it manages its natural sights, emphasizes its diversity and preserves its customs and traditions," says Mitja Jus, managing partner at Roundabout Travel.



ROUNDABOUT TRAVEL

Lake Bled, Slovenia

The Ljubljana-based company joined NTA in 2016, and its team is focused on introducing travelers to the wide range of offerings in its relatively small home country. "All tours are designed to capture the most of [Slovenia's] geographical, cultural and ethnic diversity," says Jus.

Tour options include multi-day itineraries and day trips. The 10-day Ultimate Slovenia tour takes travelers from the capital city to the Kamnik Alps, the emerald Soča River, the coastal Škocjan Caves and the fairytale-esque Predjama Castle, among other stops.

Slovenia's compact size means that many of its top attractions can be seen on day trips from Ljubljana.

"Roundabout's tours are focused on guaranteeing exceptional service, taking guests not only to the most popular attractions, but making sure guests experience the authenticity of the places, people and culture," says Jus. "Not to mention all the small culinary and wine delights to round out the amazing travel adventures."

To learn more, contact Jus at mitja.jus@roundabout.si or go to travel-slovenia.com.

Courier's GUIDE TO NTA-MEMBER MUSEUMS



Seattle's Museum of Flight

During visits to the variety of cutting-edge attractions that are part of the NTA membership, groups can explore art and artifacts pertaining to history, world cultures, science and the natural world. The museums listed on the following pages offer visitors world-class exhibits, special events, behind-the-scenes tours, hands-on programs and more.

Listings in this guide are based on a company's primary membership category or profile selections. The information was provided by the member contact and was current as of June 14. Please check NTAonline.com for updated information on the association's museum members

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

Canadian Museum of Nature

Lorna Sierolawski
240 McLeod St.
Ottawa, ON K2P 2R1
+1.613.566.4235
lsierolawski@mus-nature.ca
nature.ca

QUÉBEC

Canadian Museum of History

Stephanie Fortin
100 Laurier St.
Gatineau, QC K1A 0M8
+1.819.776.7086
information@historymuseum.ca
historymuseum.ca

Québec Copper Art Studio & Museum Albert Gilles

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

Québec's National Shrines

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+1.647.502.1161
francois@vielmarketing.com
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Tom White
1 Tranquility Base
Huntsville, AL 35805
+1.256.721.7124
tom.white@spacecamp.com
spacecamp.com

USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park

Rhonda Davis
2703 Battleship Parkway
Mobile, AL 36602
+1.251.433.2703
rdavis@ussalabama.com
ussalabama.com

ALASKA

Alaska Native Heritage Center

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

CALIFORNIA

Aquarium of the Bay

Cathy Tolentino
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San Francisco, CA 94133
+1.415.262.4723
cat@bay.org
aquariumofthebay.org

California Academy of Sciences

Cyd Antang
55 Music Concourse Drive
San Francisco, CA 94118
+1.415.379.5205
cantang@calacademy.org
calacademy.org

Hearst Castle

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

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

Intel Museum

Kelli Ambrosi
2200 Mission College Blvd.
Santa Clara, CA 95054
+1.408.765.5050
museum@intel.com
intel.com/museum

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

Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Jennifer Greenebaum
900 Exposition Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90007
+1.213.763.3280
jgreeneb@nhm.org
nhm.org

Pacific Battleship Center

Jonathan Williams
250 South Harbor Blvd.
San Pedro, CA 90731
877.446.9261
jwilliams@labattleship.com
pacificbattleship.com

PIER 39

Jodi Cumming
P.O. Box 193730
San Francisco, CA 94119-3730
+1.415.705.5500
jodi@pier39.com
pier39.com

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum

Melissa Giller
40 Presidential Drive
Simi Valley, CA 93065-0600
+1.805.522.2977
mgiller@reaganfoundation.org
reaganlibrary.com

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

Lesley Makishima
151 3rd St.
San Francisco, CA 94103
+1.415.915.1449
lmakishima@sfmoma.org
sfmoma.org

USS Midway Museum

Joe Wagstaff
910 N. Harbor Drive
San Diego, CA 92101-5811
+1.619.398.8249
jwagstaff@midway.org
midway.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

History Colorado

Brittany Gutierrez
301 N. Union
Pueblo, CO 81003
+1.719.583.0453
brittany.gutierrez@state.co.us
historycolorado.org

Old Town Museum and Emporium

Nikki Wall
420 S. 14th St.
Burlington, CO 80807
+1.719.346.8404
nikki.wall@burlingtoncolo.com
burlingtoncolo.com/old-town-museum.htm

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

Hillwood Estate Museum & Gardens

Meredith DeSantis
4155 Linnean Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20008-3806
+1.202.243.3914
grouptours@hillwoodmuseum.org
hillwoodmuseum.org

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

Newseum

Roxana Rivera
555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20001-2114
+1.202.292.6322
rrivera@newseum.org
newseum.org

FLORIDA

Coral Castle

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The Dali Museum

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+1.727.623.4708
jnixon@thedali.org
thedali.org

Edison & Ford Winter Estates

Lisa Wilson
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Fort Myers, FL 33901-3315
+1.239.335.3670
lsbuttoni@edisonfordwinterestates.org
edisonfordwinterestates.org

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex

Alania Cordes
Mail Code: DNPS
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+1.321.449.4400
acordes@delawarenorth.com
kennedyspacecenter.com

GEORGIA

Telfair Museums

Mindy Shepard
207 York St.
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telfair.org

ILLINOIS

Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum

Mara Sullivan
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msullivan@adlerplanetarium.org
adlerplanetarium.org

Chicago Architecture Foundation

Deb Rodak
224 S. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60604-2505
+1.312.922.3432
grouptours@architecture.org
architecture.org

Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center

Sharon Fine
9603 Woods Drive
Skokie, IL 60077
+1.847.967.4871
sharon.fine@ilhme.org
ilholocaustmuseum.org

Museum of Science and Industry

Amy Tometich
5700 South Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, IL 60637
+1.773.684.1414
amy.tometich@msichicago.org
msichicago.org

KENTUCKY

National Corvette Museum

Debbie Eaton
350 Corvette Drive
Bowling Green, KY 42101
+1.270.781.7973
debbie@corvettemuseum.org
corvettemuseum.org

LOUISIANA

Mardi Gras World

Brooke Pickett
1380 Port of New Orleans Place
New Orleans, LA 70130
+1.504.527.0389
brookep@mardigrasworld.com
mardigrasworld.com

The National World War II Museum

Ruth Katz
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New Orleans, LA 70130-3813
+1.504.528.1944 (222)
ruth.katz@nationalww2museum.org
nationalww2museum.org

MASSACHUSETTS

Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate

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210 Morrissey Blvd.; Columbia Point
Boston, MA 02125-3314
+1.857.271.3371
namita.raina@emkinstitute.org
emkinstitute.org

John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum

Lee Statham
Columbia Point
Boston, MA 02125
+1.617.514.1589
kennedy.groupvisits@nara.gov
jfklibrary.org

Peabody Essex Museum

Jennifer Close
East India Square
Salem, MA 01970
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jennifer_close@pem.org
pem.org

Plimoth Plantation

Janet Young
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Salem Witch Museum

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salemwitchmuseum.com

MICHIGAN

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MISSOURI

Gateway Arch Riverfront

Kelly Hutchison
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Missouri History Museum

Tami Goldman
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tgold@mohistory.org
mohistory.org

National Blues Museum

Casey Jolley
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cjolley@nationalbluesmuseum.org
nationalbluesmuseum.org

Saint Louis Science Center

Michael Wense
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Wonders of Wildlife Museum & Aquarium

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svonhenning@themobmuseum.org
themobmuseum.org

Springs Preserve

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pietra.sardelli@springspreserve.org
springspreserve.org

NEW YORK

9/11 Tribute Center

Willie Davis
92 Greenwich St.
New York, NY 10006
+1.212.422.3520 (121)
wdavis@tributewtc.org
tributewtc.org

American Museum of Natural History

James Cuebas
Central Park W 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
berrysk@cmog.org
cmog.org/groups

Gulliver's Gate

Adriana Vargas
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New York, NY 10036
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adrianav@gulliversgate.com
gulliversgate.com

Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum

Mike Onysko
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Pier 86
New York, NY 10036
+1.646.381.5011
monysko@intrepidmuseum.org
intrepidmuseum.org

Merlin Entertainments

Sheelagh Wylie
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New York, NY 10036-7215
+1.212.512.9616
sheelagh.wylie@merlinentertainments.biz
merlinentertainments.biz

Metropolitan Museum of Art

Haley Ward
1000 5th Ave. at 82nd St.
New York, NY 10028
+1.212.650.2012
haley.ward@metmuseum.org
metmuseum.org

Museum of Modern Art

Carly McCloskey
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New York, NY 10019
+1.212.708.9400
tourism@moma.org
moma.org

National Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum

June Dolhun
25 Main St.
Cooperstown, NY 13326-1330
+1.607.547.0312
jdolhun@baseballhall.org
baseballhall.org

Ripley's Believe It or Not! Times Square

Stacy Shuster
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stacy@ripleysnewyork.com
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The Strong National Museum of Play

Karen Dodson
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kdodson@museumofplay.org
museumofplay.org

OHIO

Cincinnati Museum Center

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Rock and Roll Hall of Fame & Museum

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Cleveland, OH 44114
+1.216.515.1228
sburns@rockhall.org
rockhall.com

OREGON

Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum

Melissa Grace
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Smith Way
McMinnville, OR 97128
+1.503.434.4185
melissa.grace@sprucegoose.org
sprucegoose.org

World of Speed

Dave Schaeffer
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+1.503.563.6449
david@worldofspeed.org
worldofspeed.org

PENNSYLVANIA

Landis Valley Village & Farm Museum

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c-jperkins@pa.gov
landisvalleymuseum.org

National Constitution Center

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Independence Mall
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1514
+1.215.409.6800
gromanelli@constitutioncenter.org
constitutioncenter.org

National Liberty Museum

Kathleen Lee
321 Chestnut St.
Philadelphia, PA 19106-2707
+1.215.925.2800 (103)
klee@libertymuseum.org
libertymuseum.org

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Shari Feldman
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groups@newportmansions.org
newportmansions.org

SOUTH CAROLINA

Magnolia Plantation

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patriotspoint.org

SOUTH DAKOTA

Akta Lakota Museum

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

Crazy Horse Memorial

Amanda Allcock
12151 Avenue of the Chiefs
Custer, SD 57730-8900
+1.605.673.4681
amanda.allcock@crazyhorse.org
crazyhorsememorial.org

TENNESSEE

Cheekwood Estate & Gardens

Meghan Lamb
1200 Forrest Park Drive
Nashville, TN 37205
+1.615.354.6389
mlamb@cheekwood.org
cheekwood.org

Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum

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222 5th Ave. S
Nashville, TN 37203
+1.615.499.8264
dromanello@countrymusichalloffame.org
countrymusichalloffame.org

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the Houston Museum of natural science

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+1.713.639.4724
carreaga@hmns.org
hmns.org

The Houston Museum of Natural Science has been a powerful force for science education in Houston for more than 100 years. We continually strive to offer the best, most groundbreaking exhibitions to the public as well as the highest quality educational opportunities for the millions of patrons; including the hundreds of thousands of students and groups who pass through our doors each year. Thank you for your interest in our museum and in our mission: to enhance in individuals the knowledge of and (perhaps most importantly) the

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Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum

Stephanie Price
2503 Fourth Ave.
Canyon, TX 79016-0001
+1.806.651.2244
sprice@pphm.wtamu.edu
panhandleplains.org

UTAH

FamilySearch at Temple Square

Cherie Bush
15 E. South Temple St.,
JSMB Main
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0401
+1.801.240.5323
bushcd@familysearch.org
familysearch.org

This Is The Place Heritage Park

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

VIRGINIA

The American Civil War Museum

Patrick Saylor
1201 E. Clay St.
Richmond, VA 23219
+1.804.649.1861 (120)
psaylor@acwm.org
acwm.org

George Washington's Mount Vernon

Rebecca Aloisi
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Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Kathy Parrish
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+1.804.340.1575
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vmfa.museum

WASHINGTON

Future of Flight Aviation Center and Boeing Tour

Terry LaBrue
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Mukilteo, WA 98275-3239
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futureofflight.org

Mt. Rainier Railroad and Logging Museum

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mtrainierrailroad.com

Museum of Flight

Bethany Carrillo
9404 E. Marginal Way S
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bcarrillo@museumofflight.org
museumofflight.org

Seattle Art Museum

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seattleartmuseum.org

Space Needle & Chihuly Garden & Glass

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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

WISCONSIN

Harley-Davidson Museum

Barbara Smyrl
500 W. Canal St.
Milwaukee, WI 53203-3208
+1.414.287.2799
groups@h-dmuseum.com
h-dmuseum.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

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COMMUNITY

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE NTA FAMILY



Where in the world is *Courier*? Well, pretty much everywhere. NTA members stepped out with copies of *Courier* across the globe recently. Pictured are:

1. Anita Koot, Scandinavia Tours (at a historical church in Vågå, Norway)
2. Daniel Schwartz, San Francisco Travel Association (at the Destinations International conference in Montréal)
3. Joan Heikens, Jamestown-Yorktown (Virginia) Foundation, with historian Don Hulick (on board the *Susan Constant*)
4. Lenni Neimeyer (third from the right), Branson Lakes/Area CVB (with other Branson tourism partners)
5. Tara Hippensteel, Hard Rock International (at IPW in Washington, D.C.)
6. Drew Schmidt, San Juan Cruises (by the *Chinook* in Bellingham, Washington)

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Meet the Members

PRESENTED BY **VISIT Clarksville**

Parks Canada

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

NTA contact: Jennifer Burnell,
travel trade advisor

Office Phone: +1.204.984.4555

Website: parkscanada.gc.ca

NTA member since: 1985

What makes Parks Canada sites must-visit spots for travelers?

Parks Canada places tell Canada's stories. Whether it's experiencing nature by wildlife watching or camping in a national park, participating in an indigenous cultural program, or trying out a hands-on activity at a national historic site, visitors have the chance to experience this country including our rich history and many cultures.

What role has your organization played in Canada's 150th anniversary?

To celebrate Canada 150, Parks Canada is inviting visitors to find out more about Canada by experiencing nature and learning about the country's history.

We're celebrating throughout 2017 by providing free admission to Parks Canada places across the country.

What are a couple of your favorite Parks Canada sites?

As a child, my favorite park was Riding Mountain National Park in Manitoba. I went there every summer with my parents. I think many people would be surprised by the spectacular wildlife watching and viewpoints you'll find there. Most recently, I fell in love with La Mauricie National Park in Québec. I went in the winter and had an amazing, very Canadian, winter wonderland experience.

What was your dream job when you were a kid?

I know it sounds silly, but working for Parks Canada! I didn't know about the organization itself, but I grew up very close to Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site, and, as a huge fan of



"Anne of Green Gables" and "Little House on the Prairie," I desperately wanted to work as a costumed historical interpreter. I'm so lucky my dream came true—I worked at the site for a number of years, and turned it into a career with Parks Canada.

For more information, contact Burnell at jennifer.burnell@pc.gc.ca.

Holiday Inn Express & Suites Youngstown West-Austintown

YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

NTA contact: Diane Maiorana,
general manager

Office Phone: +1.330.505.5700

Website: hiexpress.com/youngstownoh

NTA member since: 2016

Tell me a little about the hotel.

I'd describe our hotel as the perfect home away from home, with an excellent staff to take care of all of your hospitality needs.

What are some awards your property has received?

We recently won our first Torchbearer Award! InterContinental Hotels Group's Torchbearer Award is given to hotels that achieve the "highest level of excellence" and is based on 12-month guest service scores. We also won the Newcomer Award and the Quality of

Excellence Award. We have a staff that truly cares and works hard to provide our guests with excellent service as well as clean, comfortable accommodations.

What are some of the popular attractions around Youngstown?

We are just minutes away from the Covelli Center, which holds many concerts as well as being home to the Youngstown Phantoms hockey team. You can explore nature's beauty at Mill Creek Park, which is just a few minutes away and definitely worth the drive. We also have an abundance of wineries nearby.

What brought you to the area?

I have lived in the area most of my life. I wanted to stay close to my family, which is why I moved back to the Youngstown area after living in Cleveland for a while. It is a great place to call home.



What destination is at the top of your travel bucket list?

Hawaii. I know it sounds cliché, but it just looks like paradise!

What's your favorite hobby?

Anything as long as I am with my friends and family. I also like to binge a show on Netflix now and then.

For more information, contact Maiorana at dmaiorana@hixyoungstown.com.

Visit Clarksville
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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.



Anderson to lead Amtrak

Richard Anderson is the new president and CEO of **Amtrak**. He comes to the railroad company as a 25-year veteran of the airline industry, having served as an executive at **Delta Air Lines** and **Northwest Airlines**.

Anderson will serve alongside outgoing CEO **Wick Moorman** through the end of 2017 to ensure a smooth transition. Moorman will then take on an advisory role.

"Richard brings to Amtrak his experience running one of the largest global commercial air carriers. The board believes he is the right leader at the right time to drive the quality of customer service that our passengers, partners and stakeholders expect and deserve while continuing our path towards operational and financial excellence," said **Tony Coscia**, chairman of the board of Amtrak.

"It is an honor to join Amtrak at a time when passenger rail service is growing in importance in America. I look forward to working alongside Amtrak's dedicated employees to continue the improvements begun by Wick," said Anderson.

Anderson was recognized as *Aviation Week's* Person of the Year in 2015, and in 2014 he was selected as one of *Business Travel News's* Top 25 Most Influential Industry Executives.



Tauck names Peters small ship cruising specialist

Scott Peters was appointed as a new small ship cruising specialist for tour operator **Tauck**. In his new role, he works with Tauck's partners to promote its portfolio of cruises as the company increases its cruising capacity.

Peters has been with Tauck for 19 years. He has worked as a director on the

company's maritime cruises and European river cruises, and he most recently served as a national account manager for the long-time NTA member's travel agent sales in the northwestern U.S.

Denver sets tourism record for 11th consecutive year

Denver hosted 31.5 million visitors in 2016, an increase of six percent from 2015, which represents an 11th straight year of record-setting visitation.

"This is a milestone year, marking the first time Denver surpassed 30 million total visitors," said **Richard Scharf**, president and CEO of **VISIT DENVER**. "Tourism is a huge economic driver for our city, and we are pleased we have been able to build on our success in driving visitor demand that fills our hotels, restaurants and attractions."

Much of the growth came from increased overnight leisure trips, with business trips holding steady from 2015 levels. 📍

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NEW MEMBERS

The following list shows organizations that joined NTA recently. Companies that also joined the Faith Travel Association have an FTA logo by their name. To access complete information on each of these new members, log on to NTAonline.com and go to the member searches.

DMO

Flagstaff Convention & Visitors Bureau

Joyce Lingenfelter
Flagstaff, AZ 86001-5359 USA
flagstaffarizona.org

TOUR OPERATORS

CYTS USA LLC

Andong Pan
Arcadia, CA 91006 USA
cytstours.com

Enjoy Travel Group LLC

Juan Contino
Miami, FL 33175 USA
enjoycubausa.com

Fields Trips

Kelly Fields
Kitchener, ON N2R 1L7 Canada
fieldstrips.ca

Four Season Vacation LLC

Bryan Chan
El Monte, CA 91731 USA
4seasonvacation.com

Hiseas Travel & Tours Inc.

David Song
El Monte, CA 91731 USA
hiseas.cn

Pengbo International LLC

John Chi
Bellevue, WA 98004 USA

Peoria Charter Coach Company



Rose Jordan-Pauli
Peoria, IL 61603-2892 USA
peoriachartertravel.com

Rocky Mountaineer

Josh Mahon
Vancouver, BC V6Z 0C8 Canada
rockymountaineer.com

Touriffic Travel Inc.

Cindy McMenamin
Malvern, PA 19355 USA
touriffictravel.com

Yo Yo Holidays Travel USA Inc.

Zhijie Zhu
New York, NY 11361 USA

TOUR SUPPLIERS

Empire Hotel

Anne Marie Wilson
New York, NY 10023 USA
empirehotelnyc.com

Fort McDowell Adventures

Aimee Brewbaker
Fort McDowell, AZ 85264 USA
fortmcdowelladventures.com

Hilton Montréal/Laval

Joel Caron
Laval, QC H7S 1Z6 Canada
hilton-laval.com

MHC Resort Parks Limited Partnership

Linda Stockwell
Signal Hill, CA 90755 USA
resortparks.com

Oakbrook Terrace Hotels

Miriam Blumenthal
Oak Brook, IL 60523 USA
oakbrookterracehotels.com



P. Allen Smith's Moss Mountain Farm

Joyce Smith
Roland, AR 72135 USA
pallensmith.com

PHI Hotel Group

Cecilia Guerrero
Kamloops, BC V1S 1J3 Canada
phihotelgroup.com

Québec's Casinos

Anie Beauchamp
Montréal, QC H3C 4W7 Canada
casinos.lotoquebec.com

Radisson Hotel & Conference Center Green Bay

Amanda Lafave
Green Bay, WI 54313 USA
radisson.com/greenbay

River Rock Casino Resort

Janice Mak
Richmond, BC V6X 3P8 Canada
riverrock.com

Texas State Railroad

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Members connecting with NTA's Beth Engel at the New England Travel Showcase in Essex, Vermont, were Keith McManis, The Essex Resort & Spa (left); and Margaret Milner, Mystic Seaport (center). Beth also caught up with Heather Colache of MeetAC in Atlantic City, New Jersey (right).

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Fake news, real challenges

Newseum uses in-depth, nonpartisan content to battle fake news

BY BARBARA MCCORMACK



TEACHERS' QUESTIONS and concerns started rolling in more than a year ago. With the 2016 presidential election ramping up, educators had a sense early on

that this one was different, and they were looking for new ways to bring current events into their classroom without sparking chaos.

By the time the election was over, teachers weren't the only ones sensing a bigger shift in the events around us and their coverage in the news media. "Fake news" became a buzzword. News producers and aggregators feared for their reputations, while news consumers feared for their sanity. Media literacy was thrust into the spotlight, as educators and the general public alike demanded more tools to address this growing problem.

At the Newseum—a private, nonprofit Washington, D.C., museum dedicated to explaining and defending the First Amendment—our mission has long led us to tackle controversial topics through the lens of the five freedoms: religion, speech, press, assembly and petition. With all eyes on the media, we're determined to help build an understanding of freedom of the press that goes beyond pithy sound bites.

In our exhibits, programs and classes for visiting students and adults, we explore how freedom of the press is a vital part of a democracy and depends on media savvy and critical thinking. In on-site and online activities, we prompt our visitors to wrestle with what it means that the First Amendment protects not only good journalism, but also flawed or misleading attempts at news.

By digging into the decision-making processes of journalists and teasing apart their own interactions with news and information, we make the case for why freedom of the press must be protected—even though it will always fall short of the ideal—and why regulations or algorithms



Students learn how to sort real news stories from fake ones during the Newseum's "Fighting Fake News" classes.

are unlikely remedies for biased, incomplete or even false information.

We've been teaching media literacy for two decades, but in response to the current political climate, we have brought these efforts to the fore and begun experimenting with new approaches. We launched a new class for visiting student groups called "Fighting Fake News: How to Outsmart Trolls and Troublemakers." In this interactive session, students get inside the heads of fake news creators and learn strategies for identifying false information. To highlight the relevance to real life, students use our laptops and their own devices to go online and immediately put what they've learned to use in a timed "Real or Fake?" challenge. In the pilot phase alone, we've taught this class to over 1,750 students from schools right here in D.C. and from as far away as Alaska.

Our resources aren't only for those who can make the trip to Pennsylvania

Avenue. We launched our "Media Literacy Maven" video series to provide a more informal, fun way to share new media literacy strategies and fake news examples with an online audience. And two bright, bold infographics provide tips for how to "E.S.C.A.P.E. Junk News" and how to weigh whether a story is share-worthy. Both are available at newseumed.org.

In addressing this vital issue, we know the stakes are high. But we choose to see this as a moment of opportunity to build on the buzz and provide in-depth, nonpartisan content that is more important and valuable to the public than ever before. Some of the news out there may be fake, but our commitment to empowering news consumers is real. 🗳️

Barbara McCormack is vice president of education at the Newseum. The organization offers free learning resources, available at newseumed.org.



Eyes of Texas are upon you: Attendees will have a photo op with a real Longhorn steer at Friday's Deep in the Heart of Texas party.

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