

NEWSnotes

Published by the Western Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus

For Member Bureaus ~ December 2007

2007 Annual Meeting

Cool Weather, Warm Hospitality

Meeting delegates from nearly 65 bureaus engaged in a rewarding mix of educational programming, networking, vendor showcase visiting, and even had some time to see Anchorage and enjoy the crisp fall weather.

Thanks to Stephanie Nowack (Tempe) and Julie Saupe (Anchorage) for serving as this year's Annual Meeting Co-chairs. We also express our sincere appreciation to the staff at our host bureau—the Anchorage CVB—for their warm hospitality and generous sponsorships. Also, thanks to our members, speakers, sponsors, and vendors for joining us at the 2007 Annual Meeting.

Opening speaker Martin Buser, a four-time Iditarod Champion represented the essence of Anchorage's new brand—"Big Wild Life™" and its sense of adventure. Buser told stories of spirit, courage, stamina (and luck!) as he described life on the Iditarod Trail and shared images of parts of Alaska few people ever see. As a bonus, Buser brought several cuddly puppies to share with the group at the conclusion of his presentation.

Author, speaker and trainer Susan Brooks addressed the issue of service enthusiasm and its effect on an organization and its staff. Presenter Tim Schneider from Schneider Publishing Company—publishers of *Association News* and *SportsTravel* magazines and organizers of the TEAMS Conference & Expo—discussed the future and resiliency of the sports-related travel and event industry. Rick Cain from TNS Travel & Leisure provided an overview of a research project the WACVB Education & Research Foundation is working on—Destination Web Site Research and Return on Investment. (See Foundation article this issue.)

Attendees had the opportunity to collect some wild ideas and energize their planning efforts at a variety of workshops focusing on brand promises, meetings and technology, teamwork in the workplace, media FAM tours, marketing ideas for smaller communities, e-mail marketing, the U.S. Hispanic market and marketing and advertising strategy development, building an effective and strategic Board of Directors, the business of visitor centers, video-based content on the Internet and use of this tool by CVBs, innovations in convention services, and performance measures.

The Best Idea Program achievement awards were presented to six bureaus during the Thursday luncheon. Each recognized bureau presented their entry to the group. More than 30 entries were received in this year's program. (See Best Idea article this issue.)



Matt Nicolai shared an Alaska native tradition of telling stories with string (remember cat's cradle?). The intricate presentation concluded the 2007 conference.



Attendees renew friendships and meet new peers at the welcome reception.

The Vendor Showcase featured trade publications, technology/information systems, research firms, and publishing companies. The showcase provided a relaxed yet productive business environment for attendees to meet with sponsors and vendors to discuss opportunities and products. Attendees who visited each vendor qualified for the prize drawing. Dawn Male from the Kenai CVB won a stunning piece of Alaskan artwork.

Away from the general sessions and workshops, attendees renewed friendships and met new peers at the

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Officers and Directors Elected

Jonathan Walker, president & CEO of the Metropolitan Tucson CVB officially took office as WACVB President at the Association's Annual Conference and Vendor Showcase, October 10-13, 2007, in Anchorage.

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Newly elected WACVB President Jonathan Walker accepts the gavel from outgoing President Kathy Janega-Dykes.

Spirit of Leadership Award Presented to Cami Mattson

At the 2007 Annual Meeting in Anchorage, WACVB President Jonathan Walker presented the Association's Spirit of Leadership award to Cami Mattson, president & CEO of the San Diego North CVB.

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Spirit of Leadership award recipient Cami Mattson accepts an engraved Tiffany tray from WACVB President Jonathan Walker.

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Annual Meeting

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Wednesday and Thursday evening receptions at The Hotel Captain Cook before dining at local restaurants.

The Anchorage CVB hosted delegates at a special outing on Friday night via a private chartered train while traveling along scenic Turnagain Arm, an arm of Cook Inlet. Inside the train cars, savory and sweet foods, libations, and time for conversation awaited participants. Later in the evening, several talented souls entertained in the karaoke car.

Saturday morning events included a presentation by Karen Kirk about how to balance information overload using tools to re-plan, re-prioritize and take back one's sanity! Matt Nicolai shared an Alaska native tradition in which stories are told with intricate string presentations.

The closing breakfast was hosted by the Metropolitan Tucson CVB, the 2008 conference host. (See 2008 Annual Meeting article this issue.)

If you missed this year's conference, make plans now to join us next year—October 8-11, 2008, at the Doubletree Hotel Reid Park in Tucson. Keep reading *NewsNotes* and view the WACVB Web site (www.wacvb.com) for conference details. ♦



Conference delegates meet with exhibitors at the Vendor Showcase.

Election

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Other officers elected at the conference include President-elect Carol Waller, executive director of the Sun Valley/Ketchum Chamber & Visitors Bureau, and Secretary-Treasurer Stephanie Nowack, president & CEO of the Tempe CVB. Kathy Janega-Dykes, president & CEO of the Santa Barbara CVB and Film Commission will serve as Past President.

Scott Beck, president & CEO of the Salt Lake CVB; Manette Beliveau, executive director of the Oakland CVB; Dale Lockett, president & CEO of the Albuquerque CVB; Maureen "Mo" McElroy, executive director of the Santa Rosa CVB; and Don Welsh, president & CEO of Seattle's CVB, were elected to two-year terms on the Board of Directors.

Kathryn Smits, executive director of the Beverly Hills CVB, was appointed to a one-year Director's term. Joel Racker, president & CEO of Utah Valley CVB, is continuing his service as a Board Director. ♦

Spirit of Leadership

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Several years ago, the Board of Directors established the Spirit of Leadership award to recognize individuals who have been exceptional contributors to this organization and in doing so exemplify the heart and soul that inspires others in our industry to achieve success.

The award celebrates above-and-beyond leadership in an amazing industry comprised of people who are willing to help their colleagues and promote the business of destination marketing.

At the conference, a special video presentation was shown highlighting Cami Mattson's extraordinary leadership and enduring support of WACVB and the WACVB Education and Research Foundation.

Celebrating 22 years on the job, Mattson has been the driving force behind the success of the San Diego North CVB as a thriving regional organization.

Mattson served on the WACVB Board of Directors from 1992 to 2001. Known for her energy and enthusiasm, she was the 15th President of the Association and one of our youngest leaders.

For nearly a decade she served as a volunteer Officer and Director—attending numerous Board meetings and chairing several committees. She also hosted and co-chaired educational events in her region. Mattson was tapped many times to serve as a presenter at education programs and to facilitate at CEO Forums.

Mattson is a notable peer resource and major contributor to the WACVB Resource Library. She was also instrumental in developing our salary and benefits survey.

In September 2006, Mattson ventured on a 16-day trek from Katmandu to Mt. Everest Base Camp to raise funds for the WACVB Education and Research Foundation and for an African school for orphans. Participating bureaus and industry partners pledged to contribute 5 or 10 cents for every foot she climbed above 12,600 feet to her goal of 17,600 feet at Everest Base Camp. She raised more than \$15,000 for the WACVB Foundation. Funds raised through the Climb for a Dime will support research projects and scholarships. At the same time, she raised \$4,000 for hot meals and uniforms for the African school.

Mattson presently serves on the Board of the San Diego County Hotel Motel Association and the California Travel Industry Association and is a past Board member of Destination Marketing Association International.

The WACVB Board of Directors and staff offer their sincere congratulations to Cami Mattson and thank her for her many years of involvement. (It's not over yet...Mattson is a WACVB Foundation Trustee!).

Congratulations...and thanks! ♦

Best Idea Awards

Six convention and visitors bureaus received achievement awards in a recent competition with their Western colleagues. The annual **Best Idea Program** showcases innovative projects and creative marketing strategies as submitted by members.

This year's awards were presented during the 2007 WACVB Annual Conference.

Following receipt of the entry forms, a Board-appointed Task Force reviewed the 30+ submissions and selected several ideas for presentation at the conference.

WACVB congratulates the following member bureaus for receiving outstanding achievement awards for their organizations.

- Mat-Su (AK) Convention & Visitors Bureau**
 Project: The Mat-Su Online Availability Report is a Web site (www.lodging-matsu.com) where Mat-Su CVB members post their lodging and activity vacancies for up to five days. These vacancies are updated by members and are live on the system year-round. The vacancy list is automatically faxed daily to local visitor centers, as well as high-traffic visitor industry businesses. Online, there are links to the member businesses that have vacancies.
- Ontario (CA) Convention & Visitors Bureau**
 Project: An ROI (return on investment) worksheet was developed to assist the Bureau's sales team in determining which pieces of business would be the most profitable for both the Ontario Convention Center and the local hotels.
- Plumas County (CA) Visitors Bureau**
 Project: The "Awesome Autumn" promotion as part of the Bureau's yearly fall foliage promotion, including print advertising, radio interviews, a fall color map/guide fulfillment piece, daily "leaf-peeper" reports posted to the Bureau's Web site, tour itineraries and free leaf-peeper kits.
- Santa Monica (CA) Convention & Visitors Bureau**
 Project: Annual Beach Summit—an open community discussion on the beach in Santa Monica to brainstorm ideas on how to improve the overall beach experience for residents and visitors.

The 50-person committee worked in three areas: Safety Perceptions, Environmental Stewardship, and Amenities/Services. Goals and objectives for each of the three areas were then developed as an action plan.

- Metropolitan Tucson (AZ) Convention & Visitors Bureau**
 Project: "Desert of Your Dreams" was an integrated marketing campaign to reach the winter visitor from Chicago and Seattle. The media plan included electronic, billboards (bus, transit, and an RV vehicle driven cross country), print, radio and cable television, guerilla techniques such as tailgate events at football games in Chicago and Seattle, as well as street teams in heavy-traffic business districts.
- Yakima Valley (WA) Visitors & Convention Bureau**
 Project: "Event Web Promotions"—The Bureau developed five Web promotions that use the main wine country events and broaden the message to include other happenings in the Yakima Valley. Activity to the Web promotion pages grows each time a new promotion is released. Membership participation grows each time a new promotion is released. ♦



Suzi Brakken (left), Director of the Plumas County Visitors Bureau, accepts the Bureau's Best Idea achievement award for its *Awesome Autumn* entry from Mo McElroy.



The Santa Monica CVB's *Beach Summit* entry in the Best Idea Program earned an achievement award. Kim Baker (left), Marketing Manager at the Bureau, accepts the award from Mo McElroy.



Board Director Mo McElroy (right) presents Casey Ressler, Membership Manager at the Mat-su CVB, with a Best Idea achievement award for the Bureau's *Online Availability Report*.



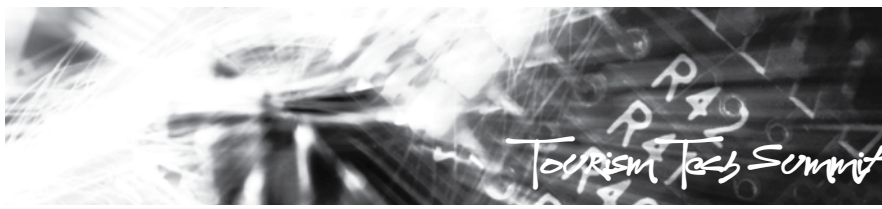
Mo McElroy presents Rick Vaughan, Senior Vice President of Sales & Marketing at the Tucson CVB, with an achievement award for the *Desert of Your Dreams* campaign.



The Ontario CVB earned a Best Idea achievement award for its *ROI Worksheet*. Amita Patel, Director Sales & Marketing, (left) accepts the award from Mo McElroy.



Wendy Walker (left), Director of Tourism at the Yakima Valley VCB, accepts a Best Idea award from Mo McElroy for the Bureau's *Event Web Promotions*.



Tourism Tech Summit

April 3 & 4 in Anaheim

WACVB is sponsoring its third annual Tourism Tech Summit April 3 & 4, 2008, in Anaheim at Disney's Paradise Pier® Hotel. The Association plans to present sessions focusing on a number of technology perspectives and strategies as they relate to distribution, marketing and member/customer/client service. The focus of the Summit is to assist members in clarifying complex technology choices and understand how consumers use technology to gather information and make purchasing decisions.

Tourism Tech Summit Co-Chairs—Scott Beck, president & CEO of the Salt Lake CVB, and Dale Lockett, president & CEO of the Albuquerque CVB—along with Planning Committee members John Fuhr, vice president of marketing, Anaheim/Orange VCB, and Bryan White, online technology manager, Portland Oregon Visitors Association—are planning sessions focusing on a range of technology issues.

Session topics under *consideration*—measuring the effectiveness of your online promotions, mapping systems, viral marketing, podcasts, vodcasts, interactive video, search engine optimization/SEO, sales force automation and contact management, online marketing and Web site promotion, online media placement and analysis, e-mail marketing program assessment, integrating solutions on multiple platforms from multiple vendors, the how and why of micro-sites, mobile marketing, writing for the Web, GPS or related systems in communities for self-guided tours, designing sites for hand-held technology and more.

Technology companies have again been invited to participate in the Summit Vendor Showcase to demonstrate their products and services for attendees.

Our hosts at the Anaheim/Orange County VCB look forward to welcoming WACVB members to their city. The Bureau will host a welcome reception at the hotel on Thursday evening, April 3.

Watch your mail and WACVB's Web site (in late January) for more information and registration materials for the Tourism Tech Summit at Disney's Paradise Pier® Hotel. ♦

Business of Bureaus Workshop

April 2 - Anaheim

Are you new to the CVB profession or do you wonder how the other bureau departments function? If so, plan to attend the Business of Bureaus workshop on Wednesday, April 2, at Disney's Paradise Pier® Hotel in Anaheim.

Kari Westlund, president & CEO of the Convention & Visitors Association of Lane County Oregon, and a WACVB Foundation Trustee is coordinating the workshop. The presenters will cover a multitude of bureau management and marketing activities—destination leadership, management issues, marketing, conference/convention sales and service, tourism sales and marketing, communications, community relations, membership, and more.

New bureau, bureau in transition, or established bureau—if you want to see the “whole bureau” picture, you'll want to participate in this session. The workshop is a valuable program for new staff or as a refresher for veteran staff.

The information-packed Business of Bureaus workshop will be presented just prior to the Tourism Tech Summit at the same location. The workshop is presented courtesy of the WACVB Education & Research Foundation.

The Foundation's goal is to condense the workshop content into four or five video modules to be delivered individually online or via DVD. ♦

A Slice of Orange County/Anaheim

Popularly recognized as “The OC,” the destination is known for its ideal year-round climate. Located between Los Angeles and San Diego, Orange County spans 798 square miles and includes 42 miles of scenic coastline and 34 cities, each with a distinctive personality. The county's tourism hub is the city of Anaheim, a vibrant metropolitan area with a reputation for fun and exceptional hospitality. Anaheim is a top business and leisure destination, featuring the Anaheim GardenWalk and The Anaheim Resort™ district. Encompassing the Disneyland® Resort and the Anaheim Convention Center, the Anaheim Resort is filled with palm-tree-lined boulevards, lush landscaping, a modern visitor transportation system and a variety of accommodations, dining, shopping and entertainment. One of Anaheim/Orange County's largest industries is its booming tourism industry, attracting nearly 45 million visitors each year.

For more information about Orange County and Anaheim, see www.anaheimoc.org. It's So California!®



Bureau Budget Survey

New Online Version to Debut

The annual Bureau Budget Survey will debut as an online version for 2008. Watch for more information about the annual Bureau Budget Survey in mid-January.

This annual survey is designed to determine member budget classifications and to provide a focus on those items having an impact on a bureau's budget. Participating CEOs will find the survey compilation useful for planning purposes. The Bureau Budget Survey is a “members-only” program, with results accessible only to survey participants.

Members use the survey information when creating budgets, researching funding sources, and planning bureau expenditures. Your industry colleagues will appreciate your participation! ♦

Tucson Conference 2008 Annual Meeting Promotion

Our 2008 Annual Meeting hosts from the Metropolitan Tucson CVB extended a special invitation to 2007 delegates at the closing breakfast in Anchorage to “Be a Star” at next year’s meeting at the Doubletree Tucson at Reid Park.

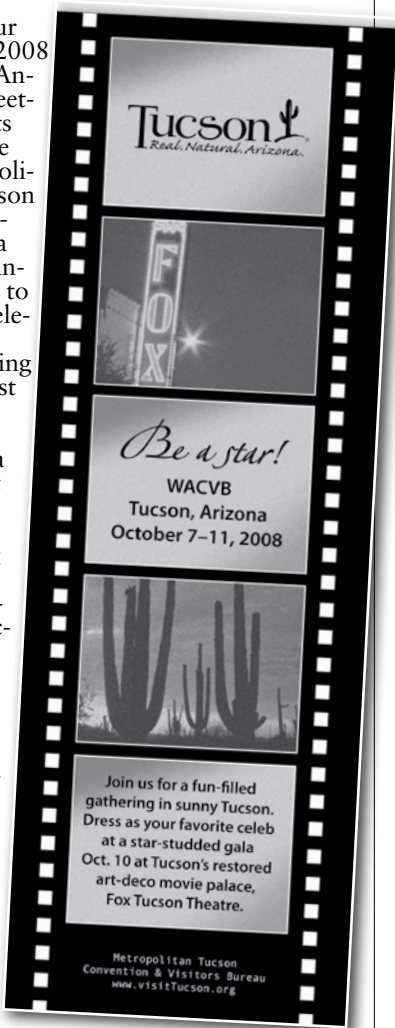
Toby Parks, director of convention sales, invited delegates to join their Tucson CVB

colleagues for “a fun-filled gathering in sunny Tucson.” With movie star props, Parks tempted members to dress as one’s favorite celeb at a star-studded gala October 10 at Tucson’s restored art-deco movie palace—Fox Tucson Theatre.

Conference delegates were also introduced to Tucson and the eye-catching Sonoran Desert via a destination video presentation.

WACVB extends a special thank you to the Tucson CVB for sponsoring the closing breakfast at the Annual Meeting and for participating at the Vendor Showcase.

Mark your calendar and join us at next year’s Annual Meeting in Tucson. The sales training sessions will be October 7 and 8, with the conference from late afternoon October 8 to mid-morning October 11. ♦



Sales Training Programs in Anchorage TIST and SIT II

It was almost like receiving individualized attention! Sales training attendees participated in small, intimate sessions during their respective two-day sessions in Anchorage.

The Travel Industry Sales Training (TIST) Program and the Advanced Meetings/Conventions Sales Institute Training (SIT II) Program convened October 9 and 10, with TIST instructor Tere Stamoulis and SIT II instructor Steve Steinhart.

A couple of comments from the TIST participants included:

“For being only four months into this job and very new to the bureau and DMO industry, I found this program helpful.”

“I’m a new CVB employee and this was very helpful.”

The Travel Industry Sales Training class suggested inviting a panel of tour operators to a portion of the class for a Q&A session. [Editor’s Note: On occasion, tour operators have been invited to participate.]

Comments from attendees at the Advanced Meetings/Conventions Sales Training class included:

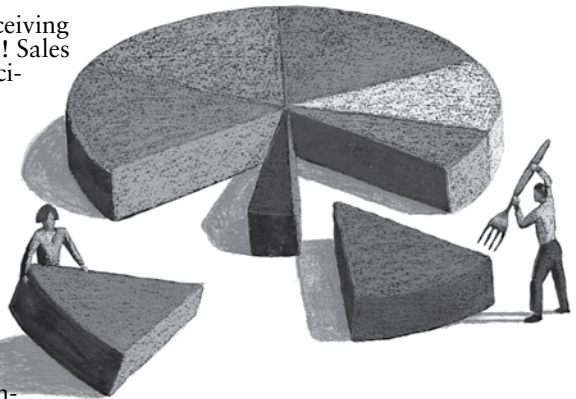
“Longer seminar; two days was not enough.”

“Great training; [instructor] able to hold a captive audience.”

“It’s an excellent program.”

“It was very informational, and I collected a number of tools.”

The SIT II class suggested several items, including more information about overcoming objection in the sales experience and specific ideas for creating relationships with association meeting planners. ♦



Mark your calendars for upcoming training courses.

Meetings/Conventions Sales Institute Training (SIT I) Program

April 1 & 2, 2008
Disney’s Paradise Pier® Hotel, Anaheim, CA

Advanced Meetings/Conventions Sales Institute Training (SIT II) Program

October 7 & 8, 2008
Doubletree Tucson Reid Park, Tucson, AZ

Travel Industry Sales Training (TIST) Program

October 7 & 8, 2008
Doubletree Tucson Reid Park, Tucson, AZ



Awards and Kudos

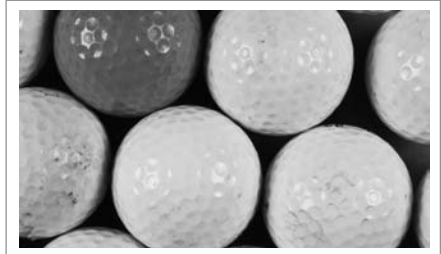
The Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) will honor **Charles Ahlers**, Anaheim VCB; **Joan Eisenstodt**, Eisenstodt Associates and **Debra Rosencrance**, American Academy of Ophthalmology, during the Education Foundation Dinner. The winners were selected for their lifetime achievement in the industry and will be honored during the black-tie dinner April 2. The dinner helps fund the PCMA Education Foundation with the money ultimately going toward meetings industry grants, research and education programs.

The **Oxnard CVB** was honored with the "Small Business of the Year" Award by the Oxnard Chamber of Commerce. The award sponsored by the Oxnard Ambassadors, was given to the Bureau for its efforts in securing a California Welcome Center in Oxnard—one of just 13 official state visitor centers throughout California.

For the second year in a row, Vancouver has been recognized as the number one gay leisure travel destination in Canada in Community Marketing's 12th International LGBT Tourism Survey. The city was also recognized as the fourth most-visited international destination among U.S. gay and lesbian travelers. The annual survey, with more than 7,500 gay and lesbian participants, is the largest of its kind. Vancouver was placed in the top spot for American gay leisure travel to Canada, above both Montreal and Toronto. **Tourism Vancouver** has been actively marketing the city to gay travelers for more a decade and has been working with Tourism British Columbia to step up these efforts with a campaign that includes print advertising in gay-specific travel magazines and guides, as well as media relations programs, Web initiatives and attendance at key industry conferences and tradeshow. In addition to Tourism Vancouver's own efforts to reach the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, the company contracts Community Marketing Inc. to provide sensitivity training and orientation workshops for many of its hospitality members, as well as its own management and front line staff, ensuring Vancouver continues to deliver genuinely gay-friendly and welcoming experiences to visitors from around the world. ♦

Above and Beyond

More Than 75,000 Golf Balls Collected for Arizona Troops



Operation White Christmas is a mission to collect and deliver golf balls to Arizona soldiers stationed in the Middle East.

Since the drive was launched August 31, more than 75,000 golf balls have been donated to the troops by golfers, resorts, municipal courses and private clubs across Greater Phoenix. The cache includes a commitment of 50,000 balls from Buy the Balls, one of Kierland Golf Club's biggest vendors; more than 15,000 from Troon Golf courses; and even a box of 300 from a donor in Illinois.

"The outpouring of generosity shown by the golfing public has been amazing," said Doug MacKenzie, spokesman for the **Greater Phoenix CVB**, which jointly organized the drive with the Valley Hotel & Resort Association, Troon Golf and Kierland Golf Club at The Westin Kierland Resort & Spa. "At this rate, every golf-loving Arizona soldier in Iraq and Afghanistan will be able to hit a bucket of balls during holiday R-and-R."

Hitting golf balls is a favorite recreational pastime of many military men and women stationed overseas, and some bases in the Middle East even feature makeshift driving ranges. But golf balls aren't easy to come by. So the organizers of Operation White Christmas spread the word to area resorts and pro shops, and set up special donation receptacles at the Visitor Information Center at Biltmore Fashion Park and Kierland Golf Club.

In addition to 75,000 golf balls, Operation White Christmas has collected more than 1,000 clubs—including several full sets.

"We're going to make sure all this equipment gets into the hands of a soldier serving our country," MacKenzie said. "We can never properly repay these men and women for what they sacrifice for us in far-off lands, away from their families and loved ones. We just hope we can help them unwind a little while they're there." ♦

CALENDAR of events

2008 WACVB Calendar of Events

Meetings/Conventions Sales Institute Training Program (SIT I)
April 1 & 2, 2008
Disney's Paradise Pier® Hotel,
Anaheim, CA

Business of Bureaus Workshop
April 2, 2008
Disney's Paradise Pier® Hotel,
Anaheim, CA

Tourism Tech Summit & Vendor Showcase
April 3 & 4, 2008
Disney's Paradise Pier® Hotel,
Anaheim, CA

CEO Forum
August 7-10, 2008
Hyatt Vineyard Creek Hotel,
Santa Rosa, CA

Advanced Meetings/Conventions Sales Institute Training Program (SIT II)
October 7 & 8, 2008
Doubletree Tucson Reid Park,
Tucson, AZ

Travel Industry Sales Training Program (TIST)
October 7 & 8, 2008
Doubletree Tucson Reid Park,
Tucson, AZ

Annual Meeting & Vendor Showcase
October 8-11, 2008
Doubletree Tucson Reid Park,
Tucson, AZ

WACVB Education & Research Foundation News

Foundation Board Leaders

New officers for the WACVB Education and Research Foundation Board include President Carol Waller, executive director of the Sun Valley/Ketchum Chamber & Visitors Bureau; Vice President Jonathan Walker, president & CEO of the Metropolitan Tucson CVB; Secretary-Treasurer Stephanie Nowack, president & CEO, Tempe CVB. Kathy Janega-Dykes, president & CEO of the Santa Barbara CVB, will serve as Past President.

The Foundation Trustees include Carol Lentz, executive vice president of services & operations, Portland Oregon Visitors Association; Cami Mattson, president & CEO, San Diego North CVB; and Kari Westlund, president & CEO, CVA of Lane County Oregon.

Destination Web Site Evaluation and ROI Research Project

An Invitation to Participate

The WACVB Education & Research Foundation has partnered with TNS Travel & Leisure to assist DMOs in ensuring more competitive Web sites. Discover how your bureau can get involved in this research project. We invite you to request a copy of the overview of the Destination Web Site Research and Return on Investment Project from WACVB staff—Web Site Evaluation: A Quantitative Measurement.

Learn how the research determines the impact the Web site has on “persuading” visitation to the destination and the Web site’s return on investment. The components of the research project include Web site traffic analysis, Web site survey with full analysis, conversion study with ROI analysis, and key driver analysis. Find out how your DMO can get involved in this pay-to-participate research project and discover the ROI for your organization’s Web site.

The Foundation Board is providing some shared-participant funding; request a copy of the Web Site Project Application from WACVB staff. As you evaluate participation in this project, the Foundation Board is aware that interested DMOs may wish to participate in a year or so. Please know the project will be available for future participation.

The Metropolitan Tucson CVB and the Portland Oregon Visitors Association have already signed with TNS as the project’s first participants.

Rick Cain from TNS Travel & Leisure invites your questions about the project. His e-mail address is rick.cain@tns-global.com. WACVB Foundation staff is also available to discuss the project at info@wacvb.com or (916) 443-9012.

Thanks to Foundation Contributors

Thanks to the many WACVB-member bureaus, individuals, and companies that have contributed funds to the Foundation for the 2007-08 year.

Thanks to the many WACVB-member bureaus, individuals, and companies that have contributed funds to the Foundation since its inception.

2007-08 Contributors (to date)

Anaheim/Orange County • Anchorage • Arlington • Beverly Hills • Calaveras • Central Oregon • Elko • Irvine • Juneau • Klamath • Lake Havasu • Lake Tahoe Incline Village Crystal Bay • Lane County Oregon • Las Cruces • Las Vegas • Marina del Rey • Mat-Su • Mesa • Oakland • Placer County • Plumas County • Portland • Sacramento • Salt Lake • San Diego North • San Francisco • San Juan Islands • Santa Barbara • Santa Cruz County • Sun Valley/Ketchum • Tempe • Tucson • Tuolumne County • Utah Valley • Valdez • West Hollywood • Yakima Valley

Scholarships Granted

The Foundation Board granted scholarships to four applicants to attend the 2007 Annual Meeting, October 10-13, in Anchorage. Each Foundation scholarship includes conference registration and travel and lodging expenses. The WACVB Annual Meeting Scholarship Program is administered by the WACVB Education and Research Foundation. Funding for the scholarships is provided by WACVB (association).

Congratulations to this year’s Annual Meeting scholarship recipients.

RoseAnn Alspektor

Tourism Marketing Coordinator/
Director
Whidbey & Camano Islands (WA)
Tourism

Lorna Davis

Tourism Development Director
Greater Newport (OR) Chamber
of Commerce

Kimberly Legato

Sales Administrative Assistant
Southwest Washington Convention
& Visitors Bureau

Yvette Mulholland

Executive Director
Yolo County (CA) Visitors Bureau

The scholarship program was established to enable bureau CEOs and staff members to attain a higher level of performance and industry knowledge by participating at WACVB’s Annual Meeting and to assist bureaus with the cost of offering quality professional development opportunities and continuing education to their staff and CEOs.

Scholarships Available

The WACVB Education and Research Foundation administers three scholarship programs to fund educational opportunities for CVB CEOs and staff. Scholarship applications are available at www.wacvb.com – click on the Foundation/Scholarships link on the home page.

(1) Tourism Tech Summit Scholarships

The WACVB Foundation Board of Directors implemented this scholarship program last year for attendance to WACVB’s Tourism Tech Summit & Vendor Showcase. The upcoming Tech Summit is April 3 and 4, 2008, at Disney’s Paradise Pier® Hotel in Anaheim. The two-day educational conference brings together the West’s top destination marketing executives and staff. The Summit includes sessions on technology perspectives and strategies as they relate to distribution, marketing and member/customer/client service and lots of one-on-one networking. Scholarship recipients will be eligible to receive complimentary registration, travel, lodging, and scheduled meals at the 2008 Tourism Tech Summit. Four scholarships are available.

(2) Executive Training Scholarships

Rosalind Williams Memorial Scholarship Program

The WACVB Foundation offers an exciting opportunity for convention and visitor bureau CEOs and senior staff executives to earn scholarships to attend executive training programs (e.g., human resources seminar on employee law, university programs, industry conferences, etc.). The executive training programs must be presented by professional organizations or accredited institutions. The Foundation established this memorial scholarship in honor of Rosalind Williams, former president & CEO of the Newport Beach (CA) Conference & Visitors Bureau.

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Foundation News

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(3) WACVB Annual Meeting Scholarships

The WACVB Foundation traditionally grants four scholarships for bureau CEOs and staff members to earn scholarships for attendance to WACVB's Annual Meeting. The four-day conference brings together the West's top destination marketing executives and staff. The program includes seminars on sales and marketing strategies and management issues plus abundant opportunities for one-to-one networking. Scholarship grants include complimentary conference registration, travel, lodging, and scheduled meals at the Annual Meeting. The 2008 Annual Meeting & Vendor Showcase is October 8-11 in Tucson.

Foundation Combo Auction

This year the Foundation had both an online auction and a silent auction. The online auction occurred prior to the WACVB Annual Meeting, while the traditional silent auction was one of the activities at the conference in Anchorage. At the 6th annual WACVB Foundation's Silent Auction themed gift baskets, exciting trip getaways, and artwork were hot items in this year's auction.

The Foundation Board of Directors extends a special note of thanks to those bureaus and organizations that contributed auction items and congratulations to those individuals who made the winning bids. Their participation garnered more than \$4,000 for Foundation projects. ♦

Donors and High Bidders

Donor: Anchorage CVB
High Bidder: Rick Cain, TNS

Donor: Beverly Hills CVB
High Bidder: Cimon Brooks,
Map Network

Donor: Calaveras Visitors Bureau
High Bidder: Candace Duncan,
Carson City CVB

Donor: Carson City CVB
High Bidder: Don Newman,
Elko CVA

Donor: Costa Mesa CVB
High Bidder: Ava Snider, WACVB

Donor: Fairbanks CVB
High Bidder: Kari Westlund,
CVA of Lane County Oregon

Donor: Ketchikan Visitors Bureau
High Bidder: Nan Marchand,
Pasadena CVB

Donor: Kenai CVB
High Bidder: Angie Briggs, TIG
Global, LLC

Donor: Las Vegas CVA
High Bidder: Michael Davidson,
Tourism Walla Walla

Donor: Mat-Su CVB
High Bidder: Scott Gere, Gere
Donovan Creative

Donor: Oakland CVB #1
High Bidder: Mya Renken,
Kenai CVB

Donor: Oakland CVB #2
High Bidder: Ava Snider, WACVB

Donor: Ontario CVB
High Bidder: Toby Parks,
Tucson CVB

Donors: Oregon by Kayak and the
River House Inn
High Bidder: Diana McAdam,
Las Vegas CVA

Donors: San Diego CVB/Rancho
Bernardo Inn
High Bidder: Diana McAdam,
Las Vegas CVA

Donors: San Diego North CVB/
Birch Aquarium/Homewood Suites/
San Diego-Del Mar/LEGOLAND/
San Diego Zoo
High Bidder: Chris Adams, Miles
Media Group, Inc.

Donor: San Francisco CVB
High Bidder: Bob Brown,
Ontario CVB

Donor: Santa Barbara CVB
High Bidder: Bob Brown,
Ontario CVB

Donor: Santa Cruz County CVC
High Bidder: Lisa Cleveland,
San Francisco CVB

Donor: Schneider Publishing
Company
High Bidder: Barbara Riddle,
Davis Area CVB

Donor: Solvang CVB
High Bidder: Diana McAdam,
Las Vegas, CVA

Donor: Sonoma County Tourism
Bureau
High Bidder: Ava Snider, WACVB

Donor: Southwest Washington CVB
High Bidder: Michelle Itagaki,
Richmond CVB

Donor: Spokane Regional CVB
High Bidder: Michelle Itagaki,
Richmond CVB

Donor: Tempe CVB
High Bidder: Amita Patel,
Ontario CVB

Donor: Metropolitan Tucson CVB
High Bidder: John Cooper,
Yakima Valley VCB

Donor: Ventura VCB
High Bidder: Jamie Rice,
PCMA/CONVENE

Donor: Yakima Valley VCB
High Bidder: Jane Roxbury,
Tucson CVB



BUREAU news

Editor's Note: To make member-bureau projects and activities more meaningful for CVB staff, Bureau News is reported by subject matter rather than by bureau name. We hope you find this format valuable as you plan innovative projects at your bureau.

Convention Centers

- The **Phoenix Convention Center** is tripling in size. The West Building is open and the North Building will open in January of 2009. Features: More than 600,000 square feet in exhibit space with 10x10 scored floors and gasketed climate-controlled loading docks; more than 100 flexible breakouts, including a 192-seat amphitheater with built-in sound, recording capabilities and translational booth; audio and video technology; fiber-optic connections for high-speed Internet and communication; Arizona Canyon design décor, with \$3 million in art, wood finishing, 140-foot glass and stone atrium; and free wireless in all public space.

Convention Marketing

- During its 2008 Marketing Plan presentation, the **Salt Lake CVB** introduced a "Return of the Citywide" theme for 2008. The entire Bureau staff is recommitting itself to the goal of booking more citywide conventions, those targeted conventions, tradeshows and meetings that have a minimum of 750 room nights on peak and will utilize the Salt Palace Convention Center. The recent expansion of the Salt Palace has launched the Salt Palace Convention Center into a select category of convention facilities in the nation. According to Bureau President & CEO Scott Beck, local Salt Lake residents and hospitality community members provide invaluable assistance each year to enhance the SLCVB staff's efforts in booking important incoming groups to Salt Lake. Ambassadors go above and beyond the call of duty in their tireless work to convince their groups or associations that Salt Lake is 'the place' for their conventions and events.

- Much like the prospectors of 1849, 10 lucky meeting professionals hoped to strike it rich in Sacramento in late September at the second annual Discover Gold Sweepstakes Grand Prize Event. The finalists were hoping to beat 114-to-1 odds and win the grand prize of \$1 million. While no one took home the grand prize, Edgar Sutton of the American Baptist Association was the evening's big winner, collecting \$5,000. The nine other finalists each won \$1,000. From December 2006 to August 2007, more than 1,200 trade show and event attendees visited the **Sacramento CVB's** booth hoping to enter the Discover Gold Sweepstakes. Nearly 250 attendees ultimately qualified by presenting pre-mailers with the winning bar code, and 10 of them were ran-

domly selected for the grand prize event. "The initial \$1 million sweepstakes in 2006 generated tremendous interest, but frankly we were overwhelmed in 2007 when booth traffic increased by 20 percent from meeting professionals wanting to enter the contest," said Steve Hammond, president & CEO of the bureau." The finalists were treated to a tour of Sacramento. At the grand prize event, each of the finalists received 20 "envelopes," with three of the envelopes containing the words "Sacramento," "Discover" and "Gold." The contestants were then asked to select three envelopes; if someone's envelopes had contained the three winning words, that finalist would have won the \$1 million grand prize. The SCVB will launch the third annual Discover Gold Sweepstakes in December at the annual trade show of the California Society of Association Executives.



Discover Gold Sweepstakes—(left to right) Steve Hammond, President & CEO, Sacramento CVB; Edgar Sutton, American Baptist Association; Mark Davis, American Airlines and Chairman of the Board, Sacramento CVB

Culinary Marketing

- More than 30 restaurants are preparing special menus for San Luis Obispo County's inaugural Restaurant Month—January 2 through January 31. For 30 days, participating restaurants will be featuring three-course prix fixe menus for only \$30, plus tax, per person. Meals can be paired with award-winning wines from Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo wine country for an additional charge. "During Restaurant Month we will showcase the many fine dining spots in San Luis Obispo County that are known for their innovative menus and mouth-watering appetizers, entrees and desserts featuring fresh ingredients available locally," said Jonni Biaggini, executive director, **San Luis Obispo County VCB**. Sample menus are posted at www.SanLuisObispoCounty.com/RestaurantMonth.

Green Business/Green Travel Destinations

- The **Marin CVB** has become an officially-certified Bay Area Green Business. The certification from the County of Marin means that the MCVB has fulfilled the requirements of the Bay Area Green Business Program and can now be recognized as a Bay Area Green Business. "We are honored to have achieved this certification," said Mark Essman, president & CEO of the Marin CVB. "We are one of a very few visitors bureaus in the Bay Area and the first in the North Bay to have achieved this designation," he said. "Our business is very paper intensive, so we had to make a number of changes in order to fulfill the requirements," Essman continued. "But it was important to do this, because we want to be a role model for our industry." "A lot of young people are looking for the Green logo," Essman stated, "so this certification will open Marin to a market that it wasn't exposed to before. A number of Marin Convention and Visitors Bureau members have already received Green Business certification. "Our goal is to make every hotel and motel in Marin a Green Business," said Essman.

- The City of Santa Cruz, in partnership with the **Santa Cruz County CVC**, has received a grant to help fund a tourism program to position Santa Cruz County as a "green" travel destination. PG&E awarded \$400,000 in grants to 75 local governments and community-based organizations for local economic and community development projects throughout Northern and Central California. The \$7,500 "Energy Efficiency through Green Tourism Promotion and Education" grant will fund a program to encourage energy efficiency measures by educating visitors about how they can be more environmentally-friendly travelers. The program will include an educational component as well as a proactive media relations aspect to provide exposure for the community and PG&E on this new approach to increasing tourism, while educating visitors about how to decrease their impact on the environment. A component of the educational approach would be a list of "10 First Steps" including best practices for travelers: Electricity and water conservation, recycling while traveling, park the car and walk/ride a bike, and minimize linen service during hotel stays, for example. In addition to energy efficiency educa-

Continued on page 10

Bureau News

Continued from page 9

tion, the CVC will incorporate a carbon reduction aspect of the program, featuring local organizations that provide an environmental benefit to the community. To get the message out about green travel, the CVC will employ the use of an insert in the 110,000 copies of the 2008 Official Santa Cruz County Traveler's Guide, scheduled to be distributed in January 2008; incorporate the green travel message on the CVC's Web site, www.santacruz.org, and through established practices of the CVC's media relations program, including press releases, its visitor E-newsletter and *The Forecast*, a business-to-business e-Newsletter produced by the CVC.

Military

- Currently, **Park City Chamber/Bureau** members have the ability to post Hot Deals! for travel and lodging, sports and recreation, dining and nightlife, shopping and services and arts and events to the Chamber/Bureau Web site. Their members can submit Hot Deals! for the military as well. The Chamber/Bureau launched a Military Hot Deals program last year as an opportunity for businesses to advertise discounts available exclusively for military personnel. The Web site's current homepage is about to receive a facelift, and as part of the new redesign, the Chamber/Bureau is posting a new and improved Military Hot Deals page. Unlike regular Hot Deals!, military deals do not have an expiration date.

Partnerships

- A new partnership has been established between the **Bend VCB** and Merrell, whereby the popular outdoor footwear and apparel manufacturer has become 'The Official Outfitter of the Bend Visitor & Convention Bureau.' "The Bend brand is a unique combination of recreation, coupled with the energy of a vibrant, cosmopolitan mountain town that appeals to active people of all ages," said Doug LaPlaca, president and CEO of the Bureau. "This is a great opportunity for us to align the destination of Bend with the world renowned premium brand of Merrell, and extend our marketing reach to a new group of prospective visitors." While corporate sponsorships are nothing new, partnerships between consumer product companies such as Merrell and leisure travel destinations such as Bend represent a marketing concept that both parties believe has significant untapped potential. "It's no longer a secret that Bend is one of the country's most appealing destinations for outdoor enthusiasts, and Merrell's commitment to such a lifestyle makes this a great partnership," said Sue Harvey Brown, marketing manager for Merrell. "We're market-

ing more than just a product—we're marketing a lifestyle—and the Bend lifestyle is a perfect fit."

As part of the agreement, Merrell will provide financial and product support to the Bend VCB for cooperative marketing programs. The Bureau and Merrell will also work together to cooperatively market and promote each other's respective brands in sales, marketing and collateral materials.

- The **Sacramento CVB** has joined the **Baltimore Area CVA** and the **Fort Worth CVB** as the third city in their innovative partnership. Baltimore and Fort Worth have been selling themselves as an East Coast/Midwest package since they teamed up in July and have been looking for a West Coast city to round out the partnership. By joining forces and sharing three additional salespeople, the partner cities have the ability to be more competitive by offering possible discounts for booking Baltimore, Fort Worth and Sacramento in a multiyear deal. If one of the cities isn't a good fit for a group, the sales staff will continue to push the other two destinations. Similar to the Baltimore and Fort Worth arrangement, Sacramento will add a dedicated salesperson who will communicate the outstanding attributes of all three destinations. The three cities will deploy three managers to work with meetings organizers across all business market segments. Goals for the three-city sales team are contingent on booking business in each city. The partnership will also include joint client events and shared marketing messages in the convention trades. One major common goal is to offer the meeting professional efficiency in learning about and building strong relationships with three major cities in each main region of the country.

Site Inspections

- When the major players in Phoenix's meetings-and-convention industry formed **Team Downtown Phoenix** this past summer, they made a vow to work hand-in-hand to attract delegates to the new Phoenix Convention Center. One day in early October, those team players showed they were serious. Hospitality staff from downtown's three largest hotels—the Hyatt Regency Phoenix, the Wyndham Downtown, and the soon-to-be completed Sheraton Downtown Phoenix—joined hands with employees from the convention center, the **Greater Phoenix CVB** and the **Downtown Phoenix Partnership** to form a human chain that stretched along Adams Street, from the Wyndham Hotel to the convention center. Their purpose? To demonstrate unity to a site-inspection team from the Unitarian Universalist Association, which is considering Phoenix for the site of its annual General Assembly in 2012. The Unitarian Universalist Associa-

tion, or UUA, represents more than 1,000 liberal-minded religious congregations across the globe. Its General Assembly would bring more than 5,000 attendees to Phoenix in June 2012, translating into approximately \$7.2 million in direct spending for the city. As the UUA site-inspection team walked the two blocks between the Wyndham and Phoenix Convention Center, their small procession was greeted by applause from the hospitality employees and orange-clad Copper Square Ambassadors who lined the sidewalk. Some members of the human chain even brandished placards with welcome messages. Donald Oswald, who leads the religious-meetings sales team at the Greater Phoenix CVB, said "We wanted to go a step further and demonstrate to our guests from the UUA that, beyond buildings, this is also a community that values unity, diversity and warmth." [Editor's Note: At press time, a site selection decision had not been announced.]

Television

- The **Travel Channel Europe**, in cooperation with **Travel Oregon** and the **Central Oregon Visitors Association**, has commissioned a television series with multi-media enhancements to promote Oregon to a global audience. Seven committed episodes will broadcast Oregon's diverse riches appealing to international travelers including Oregon's Bounty, Outdoor Adventure, Wild West and Native American cultures, Eco Tourism, Seasonal Activities, Coastal and Marine attractions, and Oregon Lifestyle/ Entertainment. The series is being produced by PrimeFilmSites, who previously produced "A Taste of California," a similar travel series featuring Californian food, wine and entertainment. An additional episode has been commissioned by the **Central Oregon Regional Cooperative Marketing Program** stakeholder and will be coordinated by the **Central Oregon Visitors Association**. The **Central Oregon** episode will feature the region's primary tourism attractions and assets, touting spectacular golf and skiing as well as the region's vast array of recreational offerings, High Desert scenic beauty, rich cultural history, casually sophisticated lifestyle and burgeoning culinary scene. The **Travel Channel Europe** broadcasts to 48 million households across Europe including those in Oregon's targeted markets of Benelux (Belgium and Luxembourg), France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Recent research indicates that 86 percent of the **Travel Channel Europe** audience travels long-haul a minimum of once per year.

Visiting Friends and Family

• During the holidays, the idea of hosting visiting relatives and friends as well as preparing an enormous celebratory meal can be overwhelming and stressful. However, the Santa Cruz County CVC offered residents a way to keep their sanity this season. Residents were invited to stop by the CVC's year-round visitor center for a free Visiting Friends and Relatives Kit, loaded with ideas to get visiting family and friends out of the house to enjoy Santa Cruz County attractions and holiday happenings. Complete with a 2007 Official Santa Cruz County Traveler's Guide, shopping directories, money-saving coupons and other goodies, this "survival kit" is an ideal way to open a visitor's eyes to the many things to do in the area. The idea is that visiting family and friends might have so much fun exploring Santa Cruz County, they'll opt for a hotel, inn, or bed and breakfast next year so they can spend even more time enjoying outdoor activities, dining, shopping, wine tasting or visiting museums and art galleries. In addition, the CVC provided a list of local restaurants that served holiday dinners.

Web Sites

• The Ontario Convention Center recently launched a new Web site for both the convention center and the Ontario CVB. Visitors to www.ontariocc.com will find information about the convention center and bureau amenities. A view of the city's amenities can be found via Google Maps, and people can sign up for the RSS feed to get the latest news on the convention center and visitors bureau activities. The new site provides faster access to the site's content. "Our new site is very easy to navigate and will provide our visitors with information about the bureau and everything the building offers," said Bob Brown, general manager and CEO. "We know that meeting planners do much of their research online, and our site offers more information about the convention center to help them do their planning." The site was built on a LAMP (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP) development platform allowing for dynamic ability within the site. Through the dynamic architecture, better utilization of natural search engine optimization (SEO) gives easy access to Internet search engines picking up Web site content. Centric (www.centric.com) in North

Hollywood won the bid to work with the Ontario Convention Center and Ontario CVB on the project.



• The San Luis Obispo County VCB recently launched its newly designed Web site. New to www.sanluisobispocounty.com is a Travelocity® reservation service, downloadable maps from Google® and itineraries featuring locals' favorite things to do and see in San Luis Obispo County in three days. Web site visitors will "Discover the Colors" of San Luis Obispo County. Colors reflect the county's extraordinary diversity—emerald green vineyards and ruby red grapes, turquoise blue Pacific Ocean and rolling hills of amber colored grasses. Additionally, special categories—Wine Country Cuisine, Cultural Corner and The Great Outdoors—offer a detailed look at what sets San Luis Obispo County apart from other destinations. The site also includes helpful tips specific to meeting planners, tour groups, wedding and events, media and filming in the county.



• Spokane Regional CVB graphic designer Jeremy Armes has created one of the nation's coolest Web sites, according to coolhomepages.com. Long used as creative inspiration, it has been Armes' goal to get the visitspokane.com Web site recognized by coolhomepages.com for the past three years. The hard work and creativity has paid off as the visitspokane.com home page has received 279,851 unique visits through September 2007. ♦

Modest Growth in Travel Projected in 2008, According to TIA Forecast



The U.S. travel industry is expected to post moderate gains in nearly all sectors again in 2008, according to the annual Travel Industry Association (TIA) forecast.

Travel spending by domestic and international visitors in 2008 is forecast to increase 5.2 percent, to \$778.2 billion, up from projected full-year 2007 travel spending of \$740 billion, which would be a 5.7 percent increase over 2006.

Domestic leisure trips are expected to continue an upward trend of modest growth in 2008, climbing 2 percent to 1.6 billion trips. Domestic leisure trips are expected to finish 2007 up 2.5 percent over last year.

Travel for business in 2008 is expected to remain stable, increasing by 0.4 percent, registering nearly 502 million trips. This slight increase will offset a projected decline of 1.7 percent in business travel for 2007, compared with a year ago.

International travel (including visitors from Canada and Mexico) to the United States is expected to rise 3.7 percent in 2008 to 55.6 million visitors, following a projected 5.1 percent increase for 2007.

However, the year-over-year data mask an 11 percent decline in overseas visitors to the U.S. from 2000 – 2007. Overseas travelers, primarily from Western Europe and Japan, represent the United States' top inbound visitors and spend the most money. Although overseas travel is expected to increase slightly in 2007, it has yet to surpass the 2000 level, despite the weak dollar making the U.S. a travel bargain. ♦

Source: Travel Industry Association of America (TIA)

PEOPLE on the go

The West Hollywood MVB has named **Jason Chiang** as marketing manager, effective October 2007. Chiang started with the WH-MVB in March of 2007 as marketing associate. Chiang's responsibilities will include oversight of the Bureau's Web-based content and managing the Bureau's Web site at www.visitwest-hollywood.com, as well as strategically promoting travel and tourism to the City of West Hollywood in the form of print and Web marketing while promoting West Hollywood's brand promise. Chiang will continue as editor of the Bureau's quarterly printed publication *OnePointNine: Business Edition*. He will also take an active role in collaborating with key businesses to combine marketing efforts.

The Olympia-Lacey-Tumwater VCB has named **Mike Dexter** as its new executive director. He replaces Tamara Garcia, who left the bureau in August. Dexter was president and CEO of the Cedar Rapids Area CVB for 11 years before resigning in June 2005. For the past two years, he worked as a consultant. Dexter has more than 20 years of experience in destination marketing, including positions in California and Colorado.



Marisa Di Domenico has joined the Pasadena CVB as national sales manager. She will market Pasadena's meeting and convention facilities, including local hotels and the expanding

Pasadena Convention Center, to associations and corporations in Northern California, the Pacific Northwest and Southeast. Di Domenico comes to the Pasadena CVB from the Marina Del Rey Hotel where she served as the director of sales and catering from 2006-2007. From 2005-2006, she worked as a consultant for PKF Consulting. From 2002-2005, Di Domenico served as director of sales for the Georgian Hotel in Santa Monica. She also has held positions at the Orchard Hotel, Joie de Vivre Hospitality and the Sir Frances Drake Hotel, all in San Francisco.

The West Hollywood MVB has named **Victoria Eagleson** to the position of marketing manager of the Avenues of Art & Design in West Hollywood. The Avenues of Art & Design, a business improvement district established in 1996, comprises more than 300 luxury art galleries, fashion boutiques, cafés and upscale furniture showrooms. Eagleson will encourage the businesses to be an active part of the Avenues by offering

the merchants a range of opportunities such as centralized press and media coverage, a community brand identity program, resource directory, and Web site promotions. Eagleson will oversee content on the Avenues Web site, at www.avenuesartdesign.com. Additionally, Eagleson will contribute to the WHMVB travel collateral, Web site, and other materials.



As the newest sales manager with the Spokane Regional CVB, **Charlotte Finnegan** brings more than seven years of experience in the hotel industry to her new position. Most recently, she was the convention services manager at the Hyatt Regency in Phoenix. Finnegan will cover the Southwest market with a focus on California.



Juan Flores, an eight-year news-media professional at *The Orange County Register*, recently joined the Anaheim/Orange County VCB as the new communications manager. Flores, a Chicago native, has more than 10 years of journalism experience, including eight years as a news assistant for the Food/Travel/Home & Garden feature sections of *The Orange County Register*. He has written articles for the Food, Travel, Sports, Entertainment and Accent sections, as well as for the Freedom Communications magazine *SqueezeOC*. His responsibilities for the AOCVCB include managing a variety of media relations and writing assignments, press tours, and maintaining the Bureau's online press room.

The Greater Phoenix CVB has named **Kimberly Freer** as its director of travel industry sales. Freer comes to the CVB from Carefree Conference Resort & Villas, where she worked as a corporate director for travel industry sales. She has more than 26 years of experience in hospitality, theme-park and travel-agency operations. Before her stint at Carefree Conference Resort & Villas, Freer worked for the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess Resort & Spa as a sales manager. Prior to joining Fairmont, she held similar positions with the Adam's Mark in Orlando, Universal Studios in Hollywood, and the Westin Walt Disney World Swan in Lake Buena Vista.

The West Hollywood MVB has named **Patricia Keaney** to the position of executive director of the Avenues of Art & Design in West Hollywood. Keaney will head up the Avenues of Art & Design, a business improvement district established in 1996. Keaney will be responsible for marketing and promoting the Avenues as well as growing corporate sponsorships. Keaney will oversee all aspects of the Avenues community outreach, marketing efforts, and branding, in addition to working with a Board of Directors. Keaney's honed her professional skills working on large-scale corporate events and movie premieres for the past 10 years.

Shawn Lewis has been named tourism marketing manager for the Tempe CVB. Lewis will assist the tourism marketing team by promoting Tempe as a premiere destination to travel agents, tour operators and consumers in the U.S. and Canada. A native of Arizona, Lewis most recently served as manager of group & convention sales at Open Road Tours. He was responsible for marketing to incoming groups as well as interacting with the sales team to develop custom tours and special programs for new clients.



Luanne Miracle, a 10-year tourism industry professional, has recently accepted a position with the Anaheim/Orange County VCB as manager of tourism development. Her responsibilities for the AOCVCB's tourism department include managing key domestic wholesale accounts, as well as marketing the destination to tour operators and wholesalers in Australia and New Zealand. Miracle was most recently senior sales manager for the Radisson Hotel Maingate in Anaheim, and prior to that was international sales manager for Universal Studios Hollywood. She spent seven years with Virgin Holidays.



The Huntington Beach CVB has named **Donna Mulgrew** as the new vice president of marketing. In her new capacity, Mulgrew will take the lead role in development and implementation of strategic marketing efforts including collateral production, advertising and Internet communications. She will also spearhead new sales initiatives for the international market, the Bureau's first real expansion beyond its historic programs aimed at domestic travelers. Mulgrew brings more than 10 years of destination marketing experience to the position, most recently with the Santa Barbara CVB and prior with B.E.T.A., Inc., a Santa Barbara County meetings management group.



Bellingham Whatcom County Tourism has hired **Loni Rahm** as its new President & CEO. Rahm joins the bureau with extensive knowledge in the tourism industry, as well as a skilled background in marketing and public relations. She has more than 25 years of program development and association management experience, primarily within the travel industry. With this new post, Rahm concludes more than seven years as the vice president of marketing and media relations with the Chelan-based R&R Marketing Group, where her client list has included the Washington State Office of Trade and Economic Development, Port of Chelan County, Southwest Idaho Travel Association, Cascade Loop Association, Okanogan County Tourism Council, Lake Chelan Wine Association and others. Rahm's marketing career began in 1980 with positions in advertising and radio broadcast. In 1990, she moved into Washington's tourism sector where she has spent the past 17 years. In addition to leadership roles at the Yakima VCB, the Lake Chelan Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Bureau, and R&R Marketing Group, Rahm has served on numerous tourism industry boards and task forces, and has represented local, regional. Rahm's crisis communication skills earned special state recognition in the wake of a series of devastating North Central Washington wildfires. In 1999, she was named Washington State's Tourism Professional of the Year.



Lawrence Stafford has joined the Pasadena CVB as national sales manager. He will market Pasadena's meeting and convention facilities, including local hotels and the expanding Pasadena Convention Center, to associations and corporations in the Orange County and San Diego markets, as well as on the East Coast. Stafford comes to the Pasadena CVB from the Crowne Plaza Los Angeles Harbor Hotel where he served as director of sales in 2007. Stafford also served as regional sales manager for La Quinta Management L.L.C. (CA) from 2005-2007. He has held sales manager positions with a number of hotels and cruise lines. In addition, Stafford is a part-time instructor at West Los Angeles Community College where he teaches various aspects of the travel industry.

Placer Valley (CA) Tourism has named **Greg Van Dusen** as its new CEO. Before starting his sports marketing consulting company, Van Dusen Strategies, in 2001, he was executive vice president of Arco Arena and the Sacramento Kings from 1979 to 1990 and helped bring the Kings to Sacramento from Kansas City in 1985. Van Dusen served on the Sacramento Sports Commission, worked as general manager of the Sacramento Gold soccer team and stadium manager for the Los Rios Community College Foundation. Placer Valley Tourism was a client of his consulting company; he had been hired to study the feasibility of building a sports complex in Placer County for large-scale tournaments. ♦

Urbanites More Likely to Choose New Destinations Reveals USTOA Survey

If you're an urban dweller you're more likely than your non-metro counterparts to explore a new destination with each vacation, according to a recent consumer survey conducted for the U.S. Tour Operators Association.



Urbanites are also more likely to buy a tour or vacation package in order to see new or unfamiliar places, and to find out more about the history or culture of an area. And when shopping for a vacation, twice as many metro dwellers first choose a destination and then shop for value (40% vs. 20% non-metros).

TNS Research conducted the telephone survey of 1,000 participants on behalf of USTOA in May 2007. Vacation packages were defined as buying hotel and airfare or other arrangements together. ♦

Source: U.S. Tour Operators Association (USTOA)

Western Destinations Guide Advertising Opportunity

WACVB and PCMA/CONVENE

WACVB will again partner with CONVENE, the award-winning journal of the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), to produce a special *Western Destinations Guide*.

This guide will be poly-bagged with the March 2008 issue of CONVENE and mailed to more than 31,000 meeting professionals and enjoy bonus distribution by WACVB throughout the year. This valuable marketing opportunity is available exclusively to WACVB members to showcase Western destinations.

In the 2007 CONVENE Membership Study, 90 percent of respondents report they conduct their U.S. meetings in the West/Southwest region and approximately 41 percent conduct, or plan to conduct, meetings in Canada. The meetings, conventions, exhibitions, and incentive travel industry is a 365-day-a-year business that operates in communities, large and small, and annually generates \$122.31 billion in total direct spending. Let's capitalize on this and get our share of the business!



Advertising Opportunities for Every Budget

Rates begin as low as \$500 net and are the same as they were in 1999! All advertisers purchasing ¼ page or larger will receive FREE matching editorial to describe their destinations' many assets. Reserve your space now in the 2008 *Western Destinations Guide!* Contact Albert Pereira at (312) 423-7277 • apereira@pcma.org or Jamie Rice at (312) 423-7248 • jrice@pcma.org.

Additionally, WACVB will receive up to six pages of editorial to promote the West as a meetings/ convention destination. Let's promote the West together! Take advantage of WACVB's partnership with CONVENE!

"Being a part of the WACVB/ CONVENE Western Destinations supplement has been a valuable part of our advertising plan each year. The quality of the publication and the quality of its readers make it a great promotional vehicle for us."

Jonathan Walker, CDME, President & CEO Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau

Resource Library

New Materials Added

We've recently added new materials to the Resource Library (see list below). The library is at www.wacvb.com – click on Resource Library. This member service is available to WACVB-member bureaus and their staff members—a username and password is required—see the online library usage information.

The materials have been contributed by a number of member bureaus and are available to assist in managing CVB operations and implementing marketing strategies.

One of the newest additions to the library is the Meetings Survey Summary distributed at the 2007 Annual Meeting in Anchorage. To support WACVB's goal of assisting its membership to better understand their industry, a meetings survey was conducted of member CVBs. This survey addressed the marketing, sales and services activities used by DMOs to promote their destinations as sites for meetings, conventions, trade shows, and other events.

Below is a list of new additions to the library, including the 2007 Best Ideas Booklet—all entries.

If you would like to submit an item for library consideration, please send your PDF documents to WACVB staff at info@wacvb.com. Please type 'WACVB Library' in the subject line of your message. ♦

ANNUAL REPORTS

Plumas Annual Report 2006-07
Santa Barbara Annual Report
2006-07

BOARDS & BYLAWS

Bylaws

Tempe Bylaws 2007
West Hollywood Bylaws 2006

BOARDS & BYLAWS

Policies

Board Responsibilities Tempe
Board Policies West Hollywood
Board Staff Expectations San Diego
North

HUMAN RESOURCES

Performance Evaluation Forms

San Diego North CEO Evaluation
Form

MARKETING & SALES

Marketing Plans

Plumas County Marketing
Plan 2007-08
Santa Barbara Marketing
Plan 2007-08
Tempe Marketing Plan 2007-08

MARKETING & SALES

Sales & Marketing Reports

WACVB Marketing Survey
Summary 07

RFP TEMPLATES

Web Design

San Luis Obispo Web Site RFP

VISITOR SERVICES

Visitor Materials

Santa Barbara Walking Tour
Brochure

BEST IDEAS

2007 Best Idea Booklet

Income, Demographics Influence What People Look for in Vacations, USTOA Survey Finds



Contrary to popular belief, the more affluent someone is, the more likely they are to return to a favored destination, according to a recent survey conducted for the U.S. Tour Operators Association.

"Most people imagine high-income travelers jetting around the world, sailing the Amazon, visiting Rome this year, Rio the next, following a safari with a sailing trip along the Turkish coast, or taking an extended cruise. However, we found that one-third of travelers with household income greater than \$100,000 indicated they preferred to revisit favorite vacation destinations. That is the largest group giving this response in any income category," says Bob Whitley, USTOA president.

The survey revealed that increased income correlates with the desire to repeat favorite vacation spots. Thirty percent of households earning \$50,000 to \$99,000 also preferred returning to favorite destinations, but that number dropped to less than 20 percent for those earning \$35,000 and less. Higher-income travelers also said they enjoy exploring a favorite destination in depth, and that a broader selection of side trips would motivate them to select a tour or vacation package.

Women and Younger Travelers Motivated by Price Considerations

Women and those reporting lower income based their vacation choices on practical factors, saying that additional meals and sightseeing included in the price would motivate them to select packaged travel. Younger travelers (18 to 34) and families with children under 12 years of age said that free hotel room upgrades were motivating factors. ♦

Source: U.S. Tour Operators Association (USTOA)

MEMBER information

Welcome New Members

In California...

Visit Fairfield
1111 Webster Street
Fairfield, CA 94533-4841
(707) 399-2445
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Terry Sullivan, President & CEO

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www.santafe.org
Keith Toler, Executive Director

Member Updates

In California...

Jennifer McLaughlin
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Travel Business Roundtable, Travel Industry Association and Discover America Partnership Announce Intent to Combine Forces, Become Single Organization in 2009

Statement by Jonathan Tisch, Chairman of Travel Business Roundtable, Jay Raslo, Chairman of the Travel Industry Association and Stevan Porter, Chairman of the Discover America Partnership

During the past year, the travel industry has achieved unprecedented legislative success and raised its voice in Washington to a new level through a spirit of cooperation among the Travel Business Roundtable (TBR), the Travel Industry Association (TIA) and the Discover America Partnership. Our efforts focused primarily on facilitating international travel to the U.S. through reform of U.S. visa and entry processes and the creation of a sustainable, nationally-coordinated promotion program.

Through this process, we have demonstrated what can be achieved for the industry when we work together to create a compelling vision for success, and a strategy to achieve it. It is in the highest interest of the travel industry to sustain this level of cooperation for the long term, in order to address the substantial challenges and opportunities of the future.

Therefore, the Travel Business Roundtable, Travel Industry Association and Discover America Partnership will

begin on January 1, 2008, the process of becoming a single organization in 2009. Components of this process include:

- TIA will absorb the staff of the Discover America Partnership;
- TBR and TIA will jointly create a multi-faceted public affairs program;
- TBR and TIA will strengthen their internal government relations capabilities, create an industry-wide grassroots program, establish a public policy research center and enhance their strategic communications; and
- TBR and TIA will explore a new name for the combined organization, based on all appropriate market research and industry input.

This fully-coordinated effort will require active cooperation and participation with other travel industry associations to best represent the broad domestic and international issues that affect the entire \$1.2 trillion U.S. travel community. ♦

Source: Travel Industry Association of America (TIA)



Happy New Year

from the WACVB Board of Directors and staff