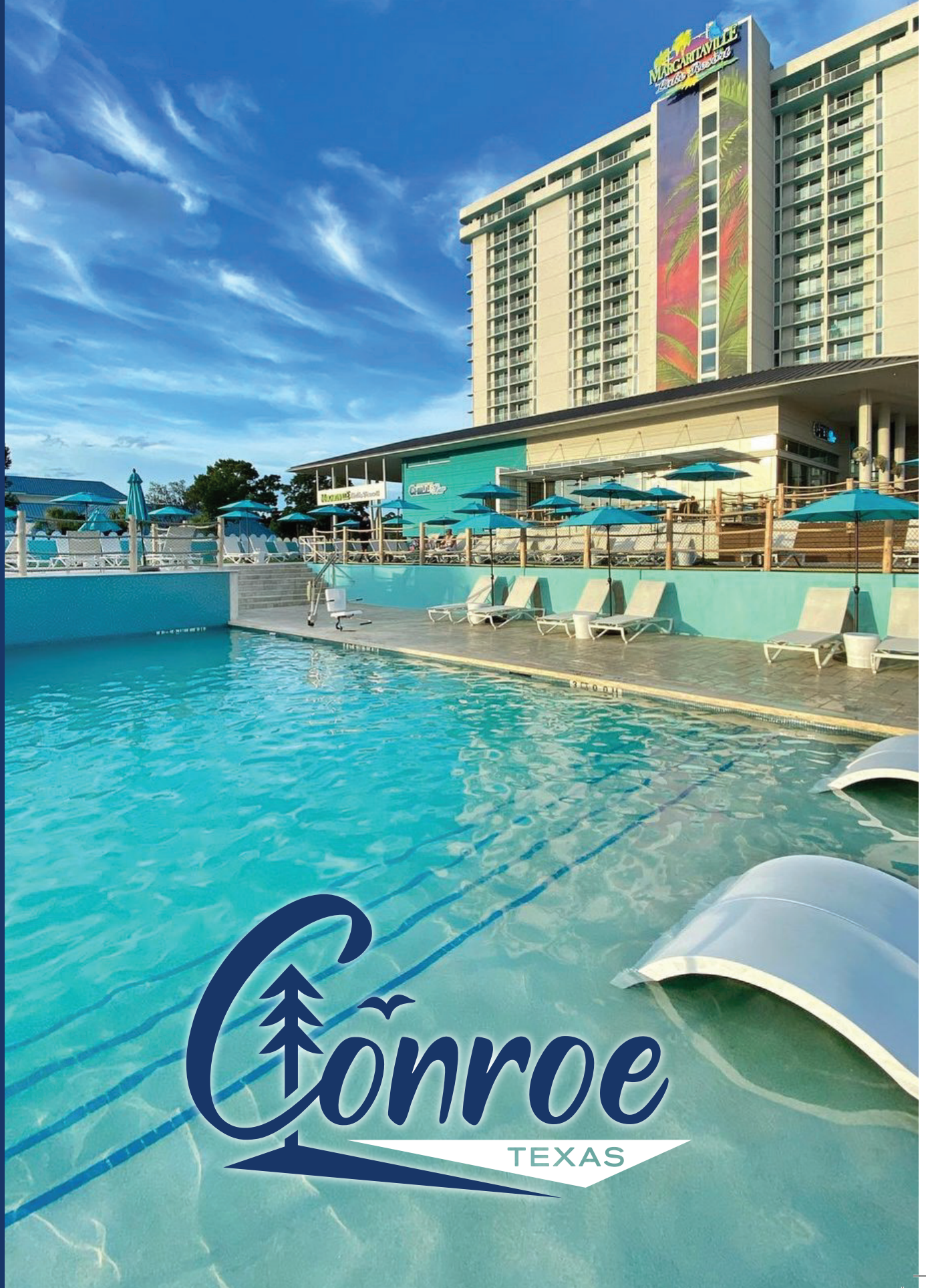


2021

# ANNUAL REPORT



*Conroe*  
TEXAS



## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Visit Conroe is to generate economic activity in Conroe, promoting the area as a preferred visitor destination and to establish the Conroe area as a premier destination for meetings, conventions, group tours and travelers.

## VISION STATEMENT

Visit Conroe's vision is to be the recognized and respected leader in the Conroe area responsible for the visitor industry by our community, stakeholders and customers.

## CORE VALUES

- **Leadership:** We are leaders in the growth and promotion in Conroe's tourism industry. We are all ambassadors.
- **Integrity:** Transparent, authentic and honest in how we work, always.
- **Innovation:** Resourceful and forward thinking through partnerships, industry trends and technology
- **Service:** We are here to serve our visitors, tourism partners, and community.
- **Excellence:** In every facet, we strive for excellence; in being fiscally responsible, producing results, growing as professionals and creating a premier destination.

## DIRECTORY

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3	Director's Letter
4	2021 Highlights
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8	Servicing
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11	Board of Directors

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## DIRECTOR'S LETTER

**A**s 2021 comes to a close, we wanted to share with you all, an update on what we have been able to accomplish in the past year as well as let you know some of our plans based on our 2022 strategic plan.

Since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, Visit Conroe has constantly been in contact with all of our partners and stakeholders. Hundreds of emails were sent over the past 18 months to help keep industry partners updated on health orders, changing event statuses, hotel and visitor metrics, and resources for local businesses.

COVID-19 has adversely impacted the tourism industry across the state, nation, and world. Visit Conroe continued to be as agile and flexible as possible. Events were postponed or cancelled. And those that did happen were often smaller in size and numbers.

However, Conroe was able to shine in a number of ways. Known for the 'Great Outdoors', Conroe was able to still promote to leisure travelers and small groups to come visit the lake or forest. The opening of Margaritaville Resort in June 2020 provided drive in visitors a place to vacation without boarding a plane or leaving the state. And events such as the Conroe Cajun Catfish Festival which hosted close to 20,000 people or the Passover Event that brought in over 1500 people for 12 days in March – definitely helped make FY21 a success.

Looking forward to FY22, the Visit Conroe team is committed to continuing the work of attracting visitors and events to our community. The team continues to dedicate themselves to its mission and to support our tourism partners. We will continue to establish Conroe as a premiere destination for leisure travelers, meetings, conventions, festivals and sporting events.

With the soon-to-be-built Hyatt Regency and Convention Center, along with the unique facility at Margaritaville Resort, the team will be able to focus on and actively pursue groups that would fit best into our community. We will continue to roll out the red carpet for our guests and provide the best customer service in order to ensure return visits.

While the pandemic may have shaken things up a bit, I am confident that we are on the right track and that together we will all continue to become successful if we continue to work as a team.

Yours in Tourism,

*Shannon Overby*

Shannon Overby, CDME  
Director



“  
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'Great Outdoors',  
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”

## 2021 HIGHLIGHTS



### CONROE CROSSROADS MUSIC FESTIVAL

A PARTNERSHIP WITH OPEN SKY MEDIA

► This new music festival will be a great addition to the Downtown Conroe music scene. Open Sky Media will use their experience of hosting successful festivals producing three days of live entertainment. The inaugural festival is set for April 7 – 9, 2022.



### HYATT REGENCY CONROE AND CONVENTION CENTER

► Visit Conroe is so excited about the announcement of the new hotel and convention center. With the addition of this state-of-the-art facility, Visit Conroe will be able to entice bigger groups and conferences to Conroe. Featuring 250 hotel rooms and 41,000 square feet of meeting space, this is sure to be the talk of the town. The current anticipated opening date is Spring 2023.

► Conroe has recorded the highest numbers in Occupancy, Revenue, Average Daily Rate, and Revenue Per Available Room over the past 7 months for the 4 years that we have been collecting such data.

*More info on Page 10!*



### GATEWAYS PESACH GROUP SELLS OUT MARGARITAVILLE

► Earlier this year, Margaritaville sold out their resort and hosted a group from March 25th – April 5th. With over 1500 people this group celebrated the Jewish holiday of Passover on the shores of Lake Conroe. Margaritaville was able to decorate the entire grounds to celebrate this important holiday for the group. Rebekah attended the event to educate the attendees on all the things they could do while in Conroe.

### NATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURISM WEEK

► Every year, the first full week of May is celebrated nationally as Travel & Tourism Week. After a year like 2020 everyone was excited to celebrate travel! Visit Conroe was no different. This year's theme was appropriately named "The Power of Tourism" and we highlighted the week honoring two individuals and an organization for this contribution to travel in Conroe. This year's Hospitality Hero was awarded to Joe Haliti; this year's Community Champion was given to Sam Cable and The Friends of Conroe was honored with the Committed to Conroe award. Each of the recipients help Conroe shine!



## 2021 HIGHLIGHTS



### HOSTED TACVB CONFERENCE

► The Visit Conroe team hosted 300 of their peers for the Texas Association of Convention & Visitors Bureau's Annual Conference in August. While here, attendees were able to enjoy great education, attend a stunning opening reception on Lake Conroe and wrap up their week at B-52 Brewery with live music.



LEFT TO RIGHT: REBEKAH KOLB, ALEX ZAVOYNA, SHANNON OVERBY, AND JODI WILLARD

### HIRED A GROUP SALES MANAGER

► Alex Zavoyna joined the Visit Conroe team October 2020, and immediately got to work. Since day one, she has successfully attended numerous trade shows and conferences promoting Conroe to meeting planners. Her success has brought an increase of RFPs from planners interested in hosting meetings in Conroe. We look forward to watching Alex grow even more!



### TEXAS BREWERY TOURS

► Conroe gained a new attraction this year! Texas Brewery Tours quickly became successful with their full-service brewery tour to all of the local breweries. Tours are every weekend starting at Margaritaville. This group offers holiday themes such as "lights and flights" for Christmas and give tourists an added benefit to their stay in Conroe.

### CREATED THE FILM COMMISSION



► In February 2021, Conroe was designated as a Film Commission City. With this prestigious designation, Visit Conroe plans to promote local film makers in the area. Being able to showcase Conroe's rich beauty to future film makers will increase visitor spending and highlight our amazing city. The first film to be completed under this designation was "The Author" and will release in early 2023.



BEHIND THE SCENES OF FILMING "THE AUTHOR"

### VISIT CONROE RECOGNIZED BY THEIR PEERS

► The Visit Conroe team was recognized at this year's annual Idea Fair. Conroe received first place in best website, cooperative marketing and tourism branding. The team also earned second place in local awareness and video. Over 70 entries were submitted throughout the state.



## MARKETING NEWS



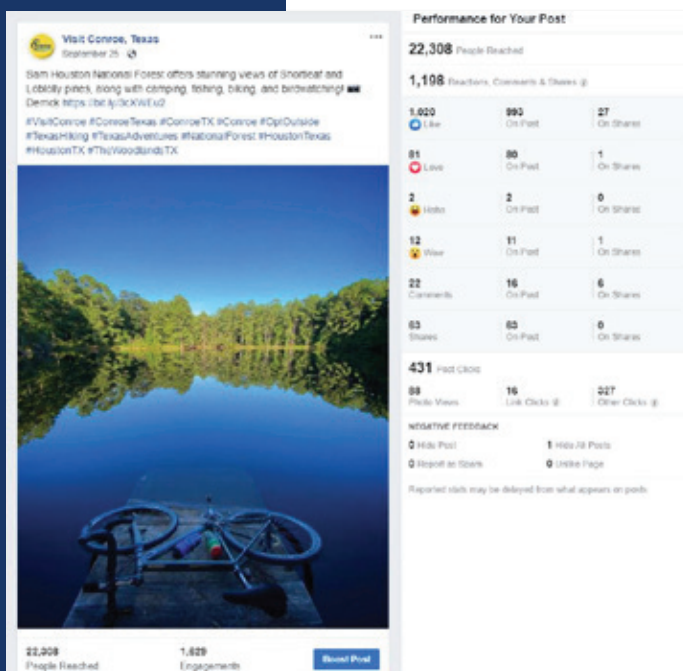
*Jodi Willard*  
Marketing Manager

**M**arketing to tourists this past year was very educational. Every marketer in the industry learned to be flexible and accommodating. Visit Conroe was no different. As events were cancelled and restaurants closed we were able to promote the beautiful outdoors. Lake Conroe and W.G. Jones State Forest became a must visit attraction for locals and tourists. Social media during a pandemic became crucial to keeping everyone up to date and all of Visit Conroe's platforms saw an increase in traffic.

This past March we launched our brand-new website. This new platform has a more organized feel with quite a bit to offer to our tourists. Our local partners, such as restaurants and local attractions, now have better opportunities to promote themselves on their individualized landing pages. Our new website better promotes Visit Conroe's five marketing pillars: The Great Outdoors, Culinary, Texas History, Arts, and Live Music. As with all websites, ours is a continued work in progress. We have plans to use ours for more in the coming year. Since we launched the new site, we have seen additional traffic.

In February, Conroe became the 11th city to earn the designation as Texas Film Commission. As part of our arts platform we enjoy promoting the great film industry Conroe has to offer. Conroe is the perfect backdrop to film that perfect commercial or show. The first movie filmed under this prestigious designation, *The Author* wrapped in July and will air after the first of the new year. Since then, Conroe has been filmed in a prime-time TV Show, a documentary, and a few commercials.

Promoting festivals and events is what we do best! This year, as events came back, we were there to help. With our new website and increased social media traffic we promoted some great events such as the Texas Taco Tequila Fest, the 32nd Annual Conroe Cajun Catfish Festival, Rising Stars & Legends Show, and many more. As we head into 2022, we look forward to promoting even more events.



FACEBOOK POST PERFORMANCE



### FACEBOOK

22,403  
FOLLOWERS

5,608  
INCREASE

17.3K  
AVERAGE MONTHLY  
ENGAGEMENT



### INSTAGRAM

3,472  
FOLLOWERS

1,711  
INCREASE

## MARKETING NEWS

### ONLINE AD



### NEWSPAPER SPOTLIGHT

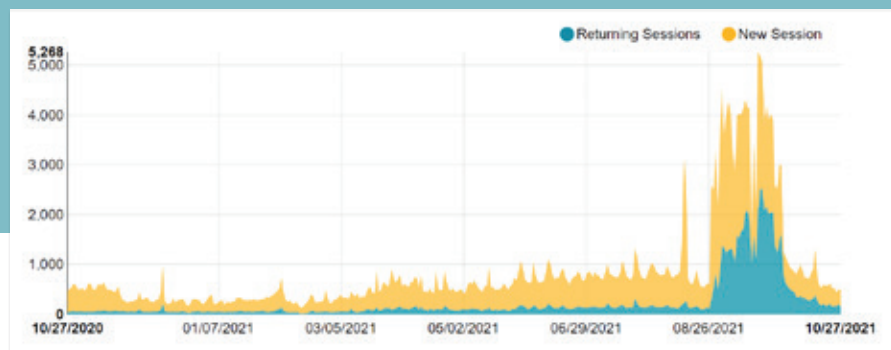


### FY 2021 ADVERTISING PLACEMENTS

Connect  
FishGame.com  
Living Birds & All About Birds  
Houstonia Magazine  
Texas Farm & Home  
TourTexas.com  
Texas Highways Magazine  
TexasHighways.com  
Texas State Travel Guide  
Texas Events Calendar  
Texas Municipal League  
Houston Visitor Guide  
Texas Monthly  
Texas Parks & Wildlife  
Texas Fish & Game  
Sam Houston State University

### WEBSITE ANALYTICS

We continue to see an increase in activity on our website. With the recent updates it is easier than ever for viewers to navigate; there is more comprehensive information, and it is updated weekly!



### TEXAS RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL

Visit Conroe is proud to be the destination partner of the Texas Renaissance Festival. This continued partnership has increased room nights and given Visit Conroe the opportunity to promote Conroe to traveling visitors.



## SERVICING



*Rebekah Kolb*  
Servicing Coordinator



### FEBRUARY 2021

#### CONROE: A PREMIER WEDDING VENUE DESTINATION

Conroe and the surrounding area is distinguished as a premier wedding venue destination. The Visit Conroe team had noticed that over 2020-2021 weddings have not slowed down! Brides are having large weddings with people staying in hotels for multiple nights. This led to the creation of an informative Wedding One-Sheet for brides to know about the services Visit Conroe can provide.

**BROCHURES** received an update with Visit Conroe's new branding. Highlights include the popular *Top 10 Things To Do in Conroe* one-sheeter and the Historic Downtown Conroe Map. The Downtown Conroe Map was refreshed to a modern, fresh look.



### MARCH 2021

The increase in weddings spurred a conversation for Visit Conroe to start meetings with wedding venue coordinators and letting them know what services we provide for brides and their guests. When the team visited with venues, a Topo-Chico-branded gift was left for the venue and their team along with the new wedding one-sheeter. This idea won first place at TACVB Annual Conference 2021!

### APRIL 2021

**PASSOVER:** Margaritaville requested that Visit Conroe set up a concierge table for guests for three days. This Passover event had around 1500 people, traveling from all over the world. Many people were interested in learning more about Conroe, and things to do in the area.

**SHSU:** Visit Conroe is a Sam Houston State Athletics Sponsor. This sponsorship comes with the opportunity to have an activation table at football games, special campus events, baseball games, and basketball games. This sponsorship gives Visit Conroe the opportunity to get in front of a large amount of people to promote the hotel and events happening in Conroe.

**AMERICAN JUNIOR GOLF ASSOCIATION:** AJGA is one of Visit Conroe's grant recipients, and this group always asked that Visit Conroe has an activation table during their registration period. In 2021, the golf tournament was held at Bentwater Country Club. This event brings in families from all over the country. Rebekah was asked to be a part of a Texas History video that was produced by AJGA.

**THE ARTHUR** film begins shooting in Conroe. Visit Conroe was able to participate in filming and able to experience the behind the scenes of this Conroe film. The actors in this movie stayed in Conroe hotels throughout the 4 week long shooting schedule.



### MAY 2021

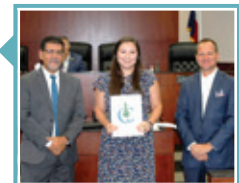
**CHANNEL 13 NEWS COMPANY** reached out to Visit Conroe about a special they wanted to produce on the city of Conroe. Rebekah was able to meet and film with CoCo Dominquez at the Texas Flag Park, and Downtown Conroe. Visit Conroe coordinated CoCo to tour Southern Star Brewery and 1097 Watersports during her stay.

### JUNE 2021

Rebekah was asked to contact our local partners for the C.K. Ray Recreation Center 10-Year Anniversary Celebration. She was able to coordinate with multiple partners to help with give away items.

### JULY 2021

**EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH!** Rebekah earned Employee of the Month by consistently demonstrating exceptional customer service in her role as Tourism Coordinator. Recently, she has taken on the role of Visitor Services – where she works not only with visitors to Conroe, but also with our area hotels, attractions, venues, and other businesses. Rebekah is always polite, courteous, and professional.



### AUGUST 2021

#### TACVB HISTORY TOURS!

Rebekah was responsible for coordinating the historical tours for TACVB. This took months of planning with the bus company, partners and partnering cities. The tour consisted of the Texas Flag Park, Veteran's Memorial Park, Heritage Museum, and Downtown Conroe where the Downtown Manager (Frank Robinson) was able to speak about the growth of downtown. The final day of the conference included a stop at the Huntsville Visitor Center, Sam Houston Statue, and the Texas Prison Museum.



## SALES INITIATIVES

**V**isit Conroe brought me on to join the team as Group Sales Manager in October 2020 amid a booming Conroe. My primary focus: to promote Conroe as a premier destination for group business! In addition to our thriving limited service properties, Margaritaville Lake Resort, Lake Conroe opened their doors in the midst of COVID, creating a prime destination for groups featuring 336 suites, 72,000 square feet of event space, and some “seriously fun” resort amenities. The close of FY21 brought some more exciting news as Hyatt announced the addition of Hyatt Regency (estimated completion the second quarter of 2023). This will add another 250 rooms and 40,000+ square feet of event space in a prime location for group business.

I had a few goals in 2021. My primary focuses, as I moved through the year, included:

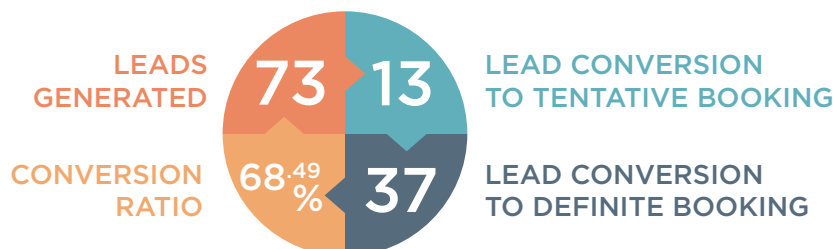
- ▶ Attend as many shows, focusing on networking and sales, as possible — we ended up making 24 trips across the country between our small team of four!
- ▶ Build relationships with hotel partners
- ▶ Create a baseline to grow from; in terms of leads and room night production in years to come

As group business increase I have created an incentive program as a sales tool to drive group business. A few highlights of this program:

- ▶ Dollar amount determined by a number of factors:
  - » Economic impact to Conroe
  - » Hotel room nights
  - » Potential for repeat
  - » Time of year/pattern
- ▶ Incentives to be approved by Tourism Advisory Council as they arise
- ▶ Groups must initiate with Visit Conroe (no existing contract with venue or hotel)
- ▶ Can range from cash incentives, hosted events, transportation, etc.

### ROOM NIGHT PRODUCTION

FY 2021 - 2022



As I now find myself in my second fiscal year with Visit Conroe I have one main focus now that a baseline has been created for leads generated, and room nights contracted and actualized... grow those numbers in FY 2022.

Indeed, it has been a wonderful, and very successful year, promoting Conroe as the premier destination it is. Looking forward to this next year, continued success of our current hotel partners, thriving local businesses and welcoming Hyatt Regency to the Conroe community!



*Alex Zavoyna*  
Group Sales Manager

“  
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[2021] focus:  
to promote  
Conroe as  
a premier  
destination for  
group business!  
”

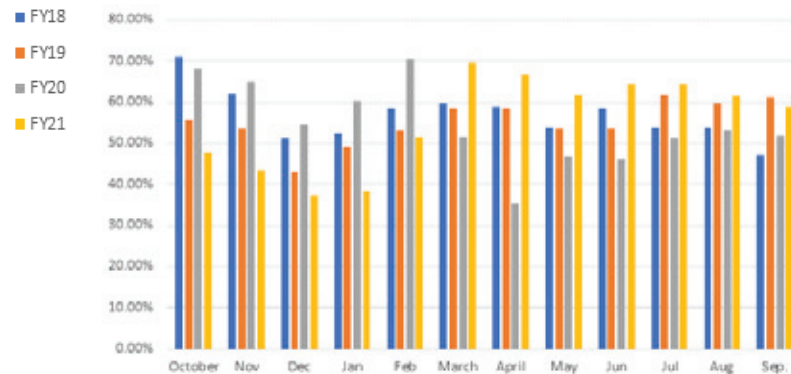
## ANNUAL STR REPORT

Over the past **SEVEN MONTHS** (since March 2021), Conroe hotels have seen the highest Occupancy, Average Daily Rate, Revenue Per Available Room, and Total Revenue Collected in the past **FOUR YEARS** that we have been collecting the data.

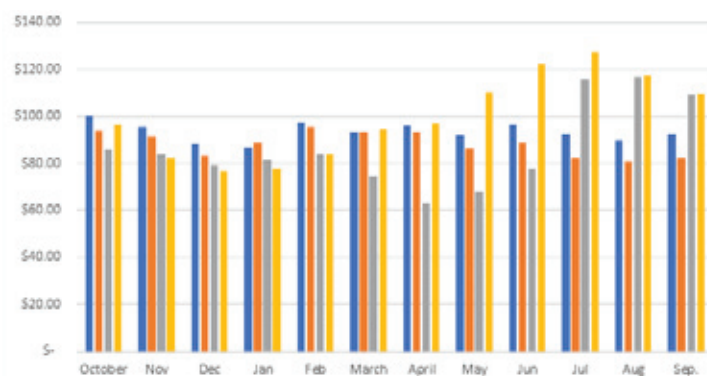
► When compared to our competitive set, Conroe hotels are third in Occupancy, second in Average Daily Rate, and fourth in Revenue Per Available Rooms.

► During fiscal year 2021, Conroe hotel supply increased 15.4% while demand increased 34.2%. The total revenue increased 59.2% overall.

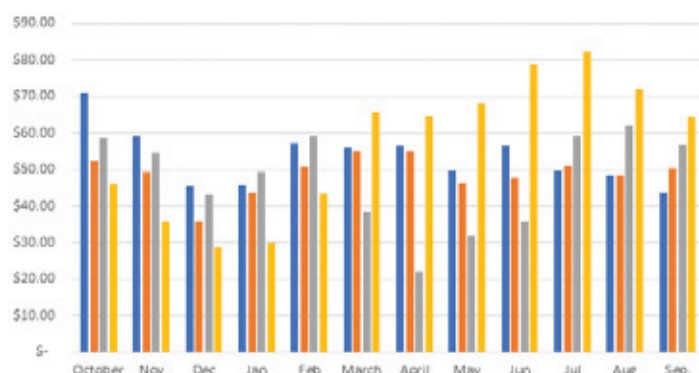
OCCUPANCY PERCENTAGE



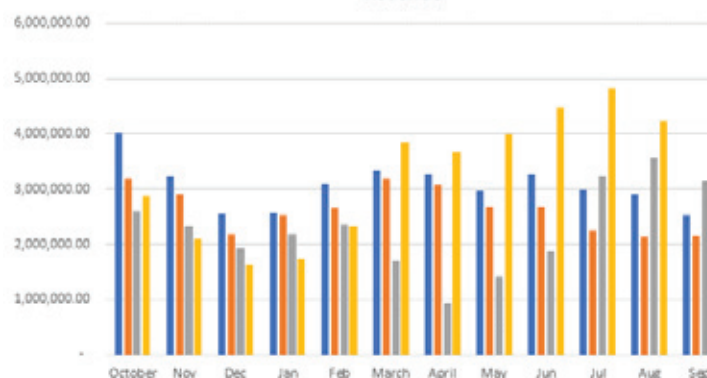
AVERAGE DAILY RATE



REVENUE PER ROOM



REVENUE TOTAL





## 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### TOURIST ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Tourist Advisory Council aids in recommending policies, budgets, grant funding, marketing programs and sales outreach for Visit Conroe. Twelve members of the Tourist Advisory Council are appointed by the Mayor of Conroe. The Tourist Advisory Council members can also appoint up to twelve ex-officio members to ensure that all community partners are represented. All appointed members serve up to two three-year terms. The Tourist Advisory Council meets bi-monthly.

Stephen Naleway, Chairman..... Events Plus  
Denton Florian..... Spirit of Texas Bank  
Keith Amador..... Southern Star Brewing Company  
Connor Murnane ..... Texas Forest Service  
Frank Jackson..... Smith Music  
Kathy King ..... Homewood Suites  
Randy Young..... Cut & Shoot Studios  
James Winkler..... The Shoreline at Waterpoint Marina  
Janice Parish ..... Brownlee Jewelers  
Gloria White ..... Heritage Museum

Todd Yancey ..... City Council Appointee  
Tom Faust..... Margaritaville Resort

#### EX-OFFICIO

Scott Harper ..... Chamber of Commerce  
Danielle Scheiner ..... City of Conroe – EDC  
Terri Strozier..... Lone Star Convention Center  
Mike Riggins..... City of Conroe – Parks & Recreation  
Maria Avila ..... Holiday Inn Express  
Frank Robinson ..... Downtown Manager

### CONROE MUSIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

Conroe Music Advisory Council is established for the purpose of aiding and promoting the music industry within the city. CMAC shall encourage the music industry, and raise the public visibility of local activity which may attract visitors, musicians, music related businesses or events to the city, and to promote and enhance all music related businesses and events.

Frank Jackson, Chairman..... Smith Music  
Stephen Naleway ..... Events Plus  
Mark Taylor ..... Brock Agency  
Clint Wright ..... Mayor Pro-Tem  
Raymond McDonald..... Musician

Rodney Pool ..... Corner Pub  
Craig Jones..... Conroe Splash Magazine  
Debbie Glenn ..... Red Brick Tavern  
Lloyd Sandefer..... Fire up the Bands

### FILM FRIENDLY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Conroe Film Commission Advisory Council is established for the purpose of aiding and promoting the film industry within the city. The CFCAC shall encourage the film industry, and raise the public visibility of local activity which may attract visitors, musicians, music related businesses or events to the city, and to promote and enhance all film related businesses and events.

Randy Young, Chairman ..... Cut & Shoot Productions  
Denton Florian..... Filmmaker  
Michael Huffine..... Silver Rock Production

Sam Cable ..... Walker Cable Productions  
Trent Soto ..... Cut & Shoot Productions  
Carl White ..... Cam Light Video



STUNNING MURAL ON DOWNTOWN CONROE'S PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE



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