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DESTINATION MARKETING &
EVENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES REPORT
JULY 1 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2022



October 14, 2022

The first quarter of FY2022–2023 was full of wonderful experiences and events as we welcomed the **Congressional Medal of Honor Society Celebration**, installed a new **Tennessee Music Pathways Marker** at Everly Brothers Park, and hosted the feature film premiere of ***Nothing is Impossible***.

The entire team supported these events and many others, all while hosting a variety of journalist visits, welcoming travelers to the Visitors Center and the Sunsphere, booking future conventions and sports events, and promoting late summer leisure travel as fall approached.

As always, we credit these successes, and additional ones detailed in this report, to the strong relationships we maintain with our tourism partners.

On behalf of Visit Knoxville, I proudly submit the July 1 – September 30, 2022 report for Destination Marketing and Event Management Services for Knoxville and Knox County.

After reviewing the following information, please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kim Bumpas

Kim Bumpas, CDME, CMP
President, Visit Knoxville

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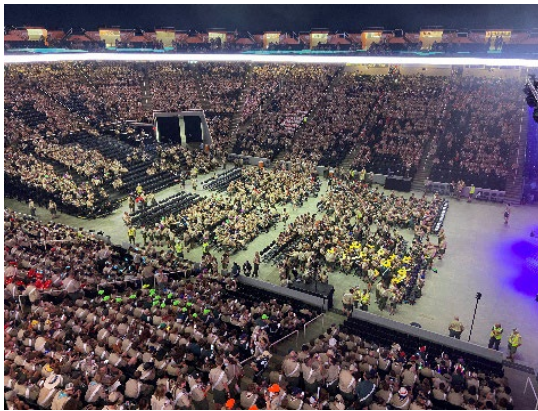
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HIGHLIGHTS SUMMARY

The following summary details select highlights for July 1 – September 30, 2022, the first quarter of fiscal year 2022–2023. These highlights can be used as a quick reference when talking about the activity and progress of Visit Knoxville (VK).

- **Co-hosting the Boy Scouts of America National Order of the Arrow Conference (NOAC)** – NOAC was held July 25 – 29 at the University of Tennessee (UT), Knoxville Convention Center (KCC), and World’s Fair Exhibition Hall (WFEH). The VK Sales and Convention Teams worked closely with UT Conferences and Event Services to bid on this event and bring NOAC back to Knoxville. VK connected various committees with off-site options such as the Sunsphere, Three Ridges Golf Course, and Navitat.

While in Knoxville for the event, welcome messages were provided at the airport, on the Visitors Center Reader Board, and pole banners on the Clinch Avenue Bridge, in Market



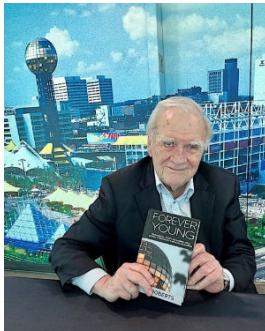
Square, and on Gay Street. VK designed and custom KNOX magnets that were displayed in the KCC and WFEH. VK created a welcome video shown at the Opening Ceremonies to all attendees. VK invited various political leaders to attend throughout the week, and Mayor Kincannon spoke at their Women in Scouting luncheon. VK also staffed a booth in the Trade Show to welcome attendees, provide visitor information, and sell Knoxville merchandise.

“It was a pleasure working with you and the entire Visit Knoxville team. We will definitely reengage as we begin our search for conferences those years!”

– Clint Takeshita, Conference Chairman, National Order of the Arrow



- **Hosting the East Tennessee Community Design Center Reception at the Sunsphere** – The East Tennessee Community Design Center hosted a festive celebration of the World’s Fair, “40 Years in the Rear-View Mirror”, on August 3 at the Amphitheater in World’s Fair Park. The Center honored former Knoxville Mayor Randy Tyree with the Bruce McCarty Community Impact Award and presented VK with a donation of \$36,000 for the Sunsphere Fund. VK was delighted to welcome 80s fashion clad guests for the pre-celebration reception at the Observation Deck of the Sunsphere, where Bo Roberts signed copies of his new book, *Forever Young*.



- **Attending the 2022 Connect Marketplace (Association and Corporate) and Connect Sports Trade Shows August 8–10 in Detroit, MI** – The VK Sales Team completed 47 appointments across Association and Corporate tracts and 61 appointments across the Sports segment with various rights holders and industry suppliers to discuss bringing potential events to Knoxville in future years.
- **Co-hosting a Group Media Tour with THE TENNESSEAN August 24–27** – Attendees included **Tamara Gane**, a Seattle-based freelance writer; **Hunter So**, a photographer and videographer; **Catherine Smith**, Readers’ Choice Awards Production Manager of **USA Today 10 Best Awards**, **Jim Myers** and **Ashley McIntosh**, writer and social media manager respectively of **Nashville Interiors** and **Venue Magazine**; **Cathy Martin**, editor of **SouthPark Magazine** in Charlotte; **Emily Donohue**, writer and influencer with **Lexington Living Magazine**; and **Brian Maass**, writer with **Texas Lifestyle Magazine**. VK assisted their group with an organized Knoxville itinerary and guided transportation that included a paddle on Mead’s Quarry at Ijams Nature Center with RiverSports, a tour of Historic Westwood, a



videographer; **Catherine Smith**, Readers’ Choice Awards Production Manager of **USA Today 10 Best Awards**, **Jim Myers** and **Ashley McIntosh**, writer and social media manager respectively of **Nashville Interiors** and **Venue Magazine**; **Cathy Martin**, editor of **SouthPark Magazine** in Charlotte; **Emily Donohue**, writer and influencer with **Lexington Living Magazine**; and **Brian Maass**, writer with **Texas Lifestyle Magazine**. VK assisted their group with an organized Knoxville itinerary and guided transportation that included a paddle on Mead’s Quarry at Ijams Nature Center with RiverSports, a tour of Historic Westwood, a

Mead’s Quarry at Ijams Nature Center with RiverSports, a tour of Historic Westwood, a

visit to the Sunsphere, a glass blowing demonstration at Pretentious Glass Co., and dinner at A Dopo. The following has since been published:

- Lexington Living Magazine Reel
- Her Bags Were Packed Instastories
- Her Bags Were Packed Reel
- Texas Lifestyle Magazine



- **Welcoming back the Congressional Medal of Honor Society Celebration September 6–11** – After successfully hosting in 2014, the VK Sales Team assisted with bidding once again to host this prestigious event. The initial bid presentation included information on Knoxville as a host city, the KCC, and the Marriott. Once Knoxville was selected, the VK Convention Services Team began participating in monthly Executive Committee meetings and pre-planning visits were held. Mayors were requested to welcome the group at the Opening President's Breakfast at the Marriott, and assistance was provided to secure World's Fair Park for helicopter take offs and landings for area school visits following the breakfast. Road closure permits were completed, and arrangements were made with local authorities to secure the area.



For the Character Development Program luncheon held at the Knoxville Museum of Art, customized nametags were created, table assignments were made, and accommodations were arranged for bus parking for each school in attendance. Additionally, off-site tour suggestions were provided, offering a wide range of options to explore in Knoxville and surrounding areas.

To welcome recipients and their guests, VK created a customized ad for the Gala program and a message was displayed on the Visitors Center Reader Board. Pole banners were placed on Clinch Avenue, in Market Square and on Gay Street, and a KNOX magnet was created for photo opportunities as guests entered the KCC for the Gala. Assistance was provided to secure an area to display the Medal of Honor logo on the Marriott nightly. The event was promoted in the 2022 Visitors & Relocation Guide, on the visitknoxville.com Calendar of Events, and on social media.



“I just wanted to thank you for the amazing goody bag you had for me in my hotel room for the Medal of Honor Convention. So many fun things! It was sure an amazing, whirlwind of a convention! Your support was greatly appreciated, and I would love to work with y’all again someday. I love, love Knoxville and cannot wait to return with my husband to explore.”

– Trish Carrier, DatocWitten Group (Third Party Event Planner for Medal of Honor)

- **Partnering with Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD) to Tennessee Music Pathways Marker at Everly Brothers Park** – Rock-and-Roll superstars, The Everly Brothers, were honored September 12 with the unveiling of a new Tennessee Music Pathways marker in Everly Brothers Park. Relatives who attended the event included Patti Everly, the widow of Phil Everly; Venetia Everly, Don Everly’s oldest daughter; and Arabella Everly, Don’s first-born grandchild. Offering remarks were TDTD Commissioner Mark Ezell, VK President Kim Bumpas, and Duane Grieve of the Bearden Village Council and East Tennessee Community Design Center. Tennessee Music Pathways, launched by TDTD in 2018, is an online planning guide that connects visitors to the state’s rich musical heritage. Sites are located across all 95 counties and include landmarks from the seven genres of music that call Tennessee home.



- **Co-hosting the premiere of *Nothing is Impossible*, at Regal Riviera on September 29** – *Nothing is Impossible*, a PureFlix feature film shot last summer in Knoxville, partnered with the Visit Knoxville Film Office on their Knoxville premiere. The red-carpet event was attended by the stars of the film including David A.R. White, Stella Parton, Stephen Baur, Robert Amaya, and Vincent De Paul as well as director Matt Shapira and producer Tommy Blaze. Representatives with the City of Knoxville and Knox County attended the red-carpet and each issued proclamations declaring September 29 as “Nothing is Impossible Day”. The movie played to a full theater and received a great amount of press. The film will be released on the PureFlix streaming service on October 6, 2022.



Thank you so much for opening your beautiful city up to us. We all had an incredible time and are so thrilled with the event. You are truly amazing partners to work with. We look forward to working together again soon!

– Angela Sullivan, Head of Publicity & Communications, PureFlix

SALES SUMMARY

- **Trade Shows** – The VK Sales Team attended four trade shows this quarter*:

- **Professional Fraternity Association (September 8-10)** – VK attended PFA in Kalamazoo, MI. VK had 15 appointments with rights holders about bringing their events to Knoxville in future years.
- **S.P.O.R.T.S. – The Relationship Conference (September 19-22)** – VKSC attended S.P.O.R.T.S in Savannah, GA. VKSC had 14 appointments with rights holders about bringing their events to Knoxville in future years.

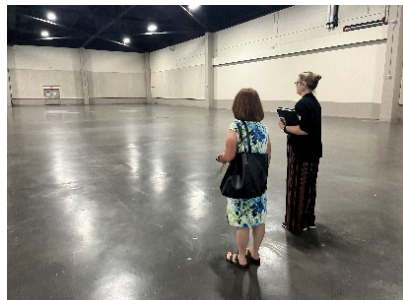


**The other two shows are referenced in the Highlights Summary.*

VK tracks each sales activity and monitors results throughout the fiscal year. For FYE23, VK received two RFPs resulting from 1Q trade show attendance.

- **Site Visits** – The VK Sales Team hosted eight site visits during 1Q:

- **Conference Carolinas** – VKSC hosted Conference Carolinas staff in hopes of hosting the 2023 Conference Carolinas/Great Midwest Men's and Women's Bowling Championships.
- **Chow Chow Club Inc.** – VK hosted two members of the Chow Chow Club Inc. staff in hopes to land their event, showing them the Marriott and the WFEH. They also were impressed with the VK Gift Shop and the fact that their baskets can be made in-house with local items.
- **Dance Machine** – VKSC hosted representatives from Dance Machine to try to bring the event to Knoxville. He was impressed with his KCAC tour and that is his first choice. He also wants to potentially move multiple events here over the next several years.



- **Mastiff Club of America** – VK hosted planner from Mastiff Club of America. We were able to have Hilton, Marriott, and KCC staff join us for lunch. The planner was a huge fan of World's Fair Park and WFEH and feels that this will lay out well for her group.

- **National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement** – VK conducted a one-day site visit with their Director of Training and Education, organizational support representative, and a local board member. They are looking at hosting their 2023 conference in Knoxville. This is a group that VK partnered with the City of Knoxville to bring to our destination and the team met with Mayor Kincannon while on their site visit.
- **National Small College Enrollment Conference** – VK hosted the group representative, and she was impressed with the walkability of downtown and the Crowne Plaza.
- **Student American Veterinary Medical Association** – VK conducted a one-day site visit with representatives from LMU and UT Colleges of Veterinary Medicine. They are looking to host the 2024 Symposium in Knoxville with 600 attendees. They were able to tour the Marriott, Hilton, and KCC. They both felt Knoxville would be a great fit for their group.
- **Tennessee Department of Tourist Development** – VK participated in the East Tennessee FAM (Familiarization Tour) with the new Sales Manager from TDTD, conducting two half-day tours that included Knoxville attractions and a walking tour of downtown and campus. A visit to the Sunsphere included an opportunity to meet former Knoxville Mayor Randy Tyree.



- **Scouting Trips** – VKSC performed three scouting trips during 1Q:

- **Chattanooga Jet Ski Club** – VKSC attended the Chattanooga Jet Ski Club Racing event in Chattanooga in July and working to host an event in September 2023.
- **PGA Korn Ferry Tour** – VK attended the 2022 PGA Korn Ferry Tour Championship in Evansville, IN in August.
- **Tennessee Governor's Conference on Tourism** – VK attended the 2022



Conference in Memphis, TN in September. VK is bidding to bring the Conference to Knoxville in 2023, 2024, or 2025.

CONVENTION & SPORTS SERVICES SUMMARY

The **Visit Knoxville Convention & Sports Services Team** provides services for conventions, trade shows, sporting events, and festivals utilizing a consultative approach based on the unique needs, specific goals, and attendee interests of each group. The Convention & Sports Services Team supported 80 events/meetings, 18 festivals, and provided a total of 100 partner referrals. All 100 partner referrals were related to events/meetings and festivals that were supported this quarter.

1Q Goals

- **Complete an Event Service Professionals Association webinar as a team for continuing education** – Completed “How Your Bias Impacts the Business” on September 21.

ESPA NATIONAL CELEBRATE
SERVICES WEEK



THROWDOWN FOR
YOUR HOMETOWN!

AUGUST 1-5, 2022

- **Participate in National Celebrate Services Week August 1–5 to celebrate the role of the event service professional, advocate for the event services profession, and provide a networking opportunity with fellow services peers** – For the first time, the Convention Services Team participated in Event Service Professionals Association’s (ESPA) Celebrate Services Week, which took place the week of August 1 – 5. On August 2, the Team delivered Paysan bagels and visited each of the

services teams at the KCC, Chilhowee Park, UT Conference & Event Services, Public Building Authority, KCAC, and City of Knoxville Special Events. This was an opportunity to thank and recognize our hardworking services professionals in our key city venues. It was also a chance to come together to celebrate the collaborative effort it takes to make Knoxville a premier destination for conventions, meetings, and sporting events.



“This is awesome and so sweet thank you so much they will love this.”
– Kate Jackson, Director of Event Services, KCC

“On behalf of Team KCAC, we thank you so much for the yummy bagels! They were delicious. Thanks again.”
– Kim Beets, Office Coordinator, KCAC

“Thanks, so much for the goodies. So very thoughtful of you all!”
– Misti L. Satterfield, Director, Chilhowee Park & Exposition Center



“Thank you for thinking of us.” – Kyle Nelson, Event Manager, Chilhowee Park and Exposition Center

*“Thanks so much for the bagels! I can’t even remember the last time I had one. It was as delicious as I remember! Thanks for thinking of us!”
– Leanna Belew, Executive Director, University of Tennessee Conference & Event Services*

Highlighted Events (additional items may be referenced in the Highlights Summary):

- VKSC welcomed the **2022 Perfect Game 13U Baseball Select Festival** the weekend of **August 19–21** at UT’s Lindsey Nelson Stadium. The tournament hosted 36 Top 13U



players from across the country and was nationally televised on CBS Sports. In addition to tournament play, each player had the mission of raising money for the East Tennessee Children’s



Hospital as part of the tournament’s local community investment initiative, which led to a donation of over \$55,000. The VKSC assisted with hotel sourcing and served as liaison throughout the event planning process between the tournament staff and the host hotel, the Marriott. Hotel needs consisted of the tournament’s sleeping rooms, meeting space, and food and beverage arrangements. VKSC assisted with the process of securing the venue and provided contacts as needed. Perfect Game invited the VKSC staff to the event’s banquet as their guest to represent Knoxville. The VKSC team welcomed the tournament attendees on the Visitors Center Reader Board and promoted the event across social media channels.



*“When selecting a destination to host any signature event, Knoxville is in a unique situation with our team at Perfect Game because of the great relationship we have with the Visit Knoxville Sports Commission personally and professionally! Adding the exceptional mutual partner in the University of Tennessee only highlights all the elements needed for a successful event in a great destination!”
– Angel Natal, Senior Director of Community Development*

- The Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals hosted their **National Outdoor Recreation Conference**



September 12–15 at the Marriott Knoxville Downtown. This event was originally scheduled for 2020 and rebooked in 2022. Assistance was provided with securing



World's Fair Park for the Tennessee RiverLine Showcase and lawn games and food trucks were arranged for attendees to enjoy each evening. VK provided transportation quotes for the various recreational activities to Norris Dam State Park, Seven Islands State Birding Park, Knoxville Urban Wilderness & Ijams Nature Center, Sharp's Ridge Adaptive Trails, and Beaver Creek Adaptive Paddling. Mayor Jacobs was on hand to welcome attendees at the opening session and the group was also welcomed via the Visitors Center Reader Board and on VK social media outlets. A customized outdoor basket was provided as a raffle item for the event scholarship fundraiser. This event was a true community effort between VK, City of Knoxville Parks & Recreation, Knox County Parks & Recreation, Legacy Parks Foundation, Tennessee RiverLine, and Tennessee State Parks.

“Visit Knoxville was wonderful to work with. Very responsive and knew who to talk to for every question that I had! Knoxville is a wonderful location for an outdoor recreation conference! It has a great balance of conference facilities, great restaurants, friendly people, and of course outdoor recreation in a beautiful setting.”

– Rachel Franchina, Executive Director, Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals

- **National Roadside Vegetation Management Association** hosted their **2022 Annual Conference** at the Crowne Plaza **September 19–22**, where 170+ attendees gathered from 18 states after two years of not meeting. In 2021 when the planner was ready to move forward with planning for the 2022 Annual Conference, VK Convention Services collaborated with the planner via conference planning calls to determine the scope of convention service needs. During the planning calls, entertainment and attraction information was discussed for spouses accompanying the conference attendees. In addition, VK discussed the need for an on-site information table staffed with Team



Knoxville volunteers. This table was stocked with a wide variety of visitor materials to appeal to all attendees. VK arranged for volunteers to staff the table during peak hours. VK arranged for Mayor Kincannon, Mayor Jacobs, and VK Sr. Director of Sports Commission and Convention Sales to greet attendees during their

opening lunch. In addition, VK posted a custom welcome message on the Visitors Center Reader Board and messages on the VK TV loop at various locations in town. VK provided a welcome gift for the planner and his spouse and the president of NRVMA. We look forward to welcoming NRVMA back in 2023.

Team Knoxville Volunteers

A total of 23 hours were provided by 4 volunteers as a no-cost, service-added benefit to the following local events:

- Team Knox served as badge checkers for a total of 12.5 hours during the Higher Education Financial Wellness Association Summit July 17-18, 2022.
- Team Knox served as information table assistants for a total of 10.5 hours during the NRVMA Conference September 20-21, 2022.
- Assisted with volunteer recruitment for the below events:
 - One Knox Playoffs – July 22 and 24
 - Food Truck Freedom – August 20
- Team Knoxville participated in the following volunteer fair to recruit additional volunteers:
 - September 28 – KUB Agency & Volunteer Fair



Additional 1Q Convention & Sports Services Activity:

- **Pre-planning visits:**
 - **Perfect Game Select Festival Pre-Planning Visit – July 12** – Planner from Perfect Game, Inc. toured the Marriott to begin planning for the 13U select festival to be held in Knoxville in August.
 - **Congressional Medal of Honor Celebration Pre-Planning Visit – August 11-12** – Event planning staff was in town to visit all sites and meet with Executive Committee to finalize details of the September event.
 - **Bassmaster Classic Pre-Planning Visit – September 21-22** – Bassmaster staff visited to inspect various sites: KCC, World's Fair Park, Thompson-Boling Arena, Maple Hall, Five Thirty Lounge, and Vol Landing to begin planning for the March 2023 event.
 - **NCAA Women's Swimming & Diving Championships Pre-Planning Visit – September 27-28** – NCAA representatives visited the Marriott and Allen Jones Aquatic Center and met with UT Athletics and VKSC Team to begin planning for the March 2023 event.

- Festival partnership and support included: Festival on the Fourth, Knoxville Sunflower Celebration, Grooves in the Garden, Kuumba Festival, 8th of August Jubilee, History Hootenanny, GermanFest, Knox Asian Festival, Big Kahuna Wing Festival, Tennessee Valley Fair, Smoky Mountain Air Show, Innov865 Week, Knoxville Film Festival, New Ground Music Festival, Sevier Days, Second Bell Fest, and Knox Pridefest.
- Conducted pre-planning calls and/or meetings for Babson College 2023 Entrepreneurship Research Conference, Ewing Irrigation and Landscape Supply 2022 Annual Meeting, Keep Tennessee Beautiful 2022 Tennessee Retreat, Innov865 Week, Big Ears, 40th Anniversary of the 1982 World's Fair Celebration Dinner, and Bike Boat Brew & Bark.
- Attended KAT Roundtable Discussion regarding vision for trolley routes on July 26.
- Toured Addison's Bookstore on August 10 to see event space and catering options.
- Presented to UT Global Scholars on August 18.
- Toured Kern's Bakery site on September 16.
- Visited Maple Lane Farms on September 19 to begin planning for October 8 event.
- Participated in the following webinars and virtual events:
 - Volunteer Match – Social Media & Volunteer Engagement
 - SimpleView – Amen to Amenities: A Deep Dive into Best Practices
 - Event Service Professionals Association – How Your Bias Impacts the Business
 - Event Service Professionals Association Leaders Webinar – New Services Certification: Event Service Professional Certification (ESPC)

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS SUMMARY

The **Visit Knoxville Marketing Team** produces, approves and places regional, national, and international advertising and social media promoting Knoxville to leisure travelers, conference and event planners, sports events planners and film and television production companies. Creative is based around the nature-loving-adventure-seeking-artsy-kind-of-town campaign and directs to visitknoxville.com. The Team also recruits and partners with journalists and influencers to share Knoxville's narratives.

1Q Goals:

- **Collaborate with the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD) on a holiday promotion highlighting Knoxville attractions** – 7/8/22 FROM TDTD: *Update on the Toy Catalog project that we have been working hard on the last few months. Over the last 2-3 weeks it has become apparent that, due to a number of factors, our goal of having these catalogs in mailboxes by early October was not going to be attainable. So, rather than cutting corners and producing something less than what it could be, we have decided to push this project to 2023. We still believe that this idea is something that could help us stand out during the holiday clutter, and we want to make sure we do it right. We appreciate your partnership on this project and look forward to continuing to work with you to make this happen. We will keep you updates as we establish new timelines.*
- **Host at least three journalists/influencers for editorial content development** – VK hosted five journalists and assisted an additional 11 journalists. Please reference the Highlights and Communications Assistance sections of this report for details.
- **Complete mid-year update of digital version of 2022 Knoxville Visitors Guide** – The digital version of the guide has been updated to reflect the most current information on festival and event dates. A link to a recent New in Knoxville blog post has also been added to the left of the cover to capture and promote some of the restaurants, shops, galleries, and attractions that have opened since the original printing of the guide.
- **Launch a downtown audio walking tour** – VK is excited to offer a self-guided, app-based audio tour through Voice Map. While based in downtown, the tour highlights points of interest throughout the county. Maps and script have been finalized, and voice production is underway. The tour will be available for purchase/download on the Self-Guided Tour section of the VK website.
- **Continue to source and promote local product for the Visit Knoxville Visitors Center Gift Shop, recruiting at least three new local items into inventory, including holiday**

items – This quarter, Visit Knoxville's Gift Shop recruited a variety of local maker products. We welcomed both brand new makers and new merchandise designed exclusively for Visit Knoxville. We are pleased to carry a new line of spices made by Knoxville entrepreneur Jason Payne of Smoky Mountain Spice Factory, a new line of apparel and accessories by local maker Dan Wilson of The DW Designs, and a new sticker exclusive to VK's collection created by Paris Woodhull.

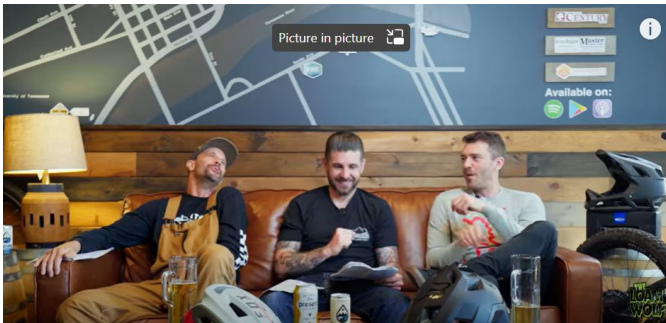
Progress Notes (additional items may be referenced in the Highlights Summary):

- VK's Marketing Team continues to work closely with VK Sales and Services Teams to create customized **creative materials**. In addition to previously referenced materials, the Team assisted with the production of a pre-promote video for Tennessee Juvenile Court Services Association.

"This (video) looks AWESOME!!!! You all did an amazing job with this, and my team thinks that as well. It was a pleasure to work with you on this and looking forward to doing more in the future. Forever grateful!"

– Kendrick Tate, Probation Officer, Knox County Juvenile Court President TN Juvenile Court Services Association

- In 4Q FYE22, the Marketing Team assisted the VKSC on a partnership with Appalachian Mountain Bike Club and Loam Wolf, a mountain bike and dirt bike media outlet. Loam Wolf filmed their best Electric Mountain Bike 2022 Shootout on various trails including the Devil's Racetrack at Baker Creek. Reviews were filmed at Knox Brew Hub and VK arranged a photoshoot at the Tennessee Theatre. To date, the episode has 1.5k views.



- VK continues to utilize its **e-newsletter**, **Community Corner**, **Visitors Center Reader Board**, and **VK Network** messaging to communicate events and activities to visitors and the community. To stay in the loop, sign up for the e-newsletter and/or VK Blog.
 - **1Q E-newsletters**
 - **Plans Falling into Place in Knoxville** – This edition highlighted family friendly fall activities, UT Gameday planning, the Knoxville Museum of Art's Radcliffe Bailey exhibition, and fall festivals like HoLa.

- **IT'S "THAT" TIME IN TENNESSEE** – This edition highlighted the 40th Anniversary of the 1982 World's Fair Celebration corn maze at Maple Lane Farms, the Tennessee Whiskey Trail, The Spirit of Día de los Muertos exhibition at McClung Museum, and Halloween events.

Current open rate for the e-newsletter is 39%*

**Simpleview reports an average open rate of 27.78% for the travel and hospitality industry.*

- The **Community Corner** is a newsletter that is produced and distributed weekly by the Visitor Services Team to help keep local partners and establishments aware of the upcoming events that may impact or encourage their business, as well as share information about local events and happenings. A total of 12 Community Corner newsletters were produced in 1Q with an open rate of 36%.
- The **Visitors Center Reader Board**, located on the face of our building, provides messages which are procured, updated, and maintained monthly by the Visitor Services Team. This includes welcome messages for visiting groups, local announcements, and encouraging messages for the community. During 1Q, 54 custom welcome messages and highlighted events were featured.
- VK continues to promote tourism partners via the **VK Network**, a loop of partner videos running in 20+ high-traffic areas throughout Knox County.
- The VK **website** continues to perform incredibly well, amassing a total of 1,040,456 pageviews in 1Q. The Smoky Mountain Air Show was this quarter's most popular event, receiving more than 17,000 pageviews. Additionally:
 - Average length of session was 1 minute 43 seconds
 - Pages per session was 1.97
 - Number of clicks to partner sites from VK website was 54,735
 - Top three metros generating traffic were Nashville, Atlanta, and Chicago
 - 532 pageviews to sign up for the e-newsletter

In this quarter, VK created new pages for the website as well as regularly updated content on various pages throughout the site which also feeds into the VK app, keeping everything fresh and up to date. For 1Q, the VK app had 578 downloads with a total of 2,372 sessions. The average engagement time per session spent on the app was 2 minutes 55 seconds.

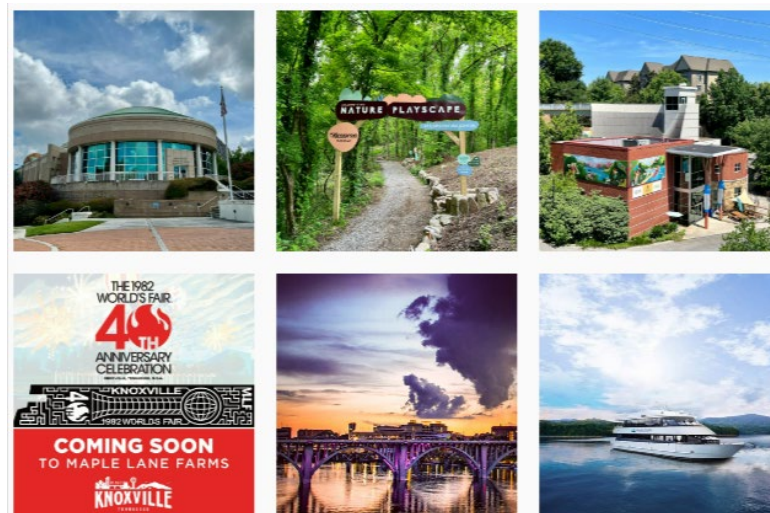
The **VK Online Event Calendar** is managed by the Visitor Services Team. In 1Q, 400 events were added to the calendar and 456 events were enhanced.

- VK continues to promote local partners in the **VK Blog** with a mix of partner writers and guest writers in addition to VK staff. Current partner writers include Jack Neely of Knoxville History Project, The Maker City featuring three themed makers monthly, members of the Arts & Culture Alliance, and Legacy Parks. Read [more](#) and [subscribe](#).



Post highlights from the quarter include:

- [Kid Reviewed Attractions in Knoxville](#)
- [A Guide to the Historic House Museums of Knoxville](#)
- [Knoxville's Coffee Scene](#)



- VK's **social media channels** serve as key elements in VK's marketing mix, focused on directing traffic to blog posts and other sections of the VK website, sharing tourism partner information, and engaging with the community. Highlights include:
 - Promoting various events, exhibits, and attractions including several Fourth of July celebrations, Kuumba Festival, Knox Asian Festival, Tennessee Valley Fair, the Smoky Mountain Air Show, and more.
 - Instagram story series including promotion of Where's Waldo, Ijams Nature Center's new Playscape, a WBHOF feature, and more.

- Additional social media partnerships included a “takeover” of Innov865’s Instagram featuring a Sunsphere reel and downtown restaurant guide and an Instagram story series promoting the gameday experience for UT vs. Florida.
- VK continues to **track marketing efforts** that contribute to hotel bookings and website traffic via ADARA and Arrivalist. According to ADARA, digital marketing in 1Q contributed to 3,656 hotel bookings. These numbers will continue to increase up to 60 days post-campaign. Additionally, organic website traffic in 1Q contributed to 5,305 hotel bookings. VK continues to pull insights from our Arrivalist partnership: for 2022 calendar to date, stay lift is 13.6%*

Stay lift is defined as the ad placements’ propensity to influence incremental time spent in the destination compared with a similar control group. From this, we can assess that our advertising is better targeting our audience(s) to increase overall stay length.

**It is important to note that we are still inside the travel window, which means travelers exposed to ads in September may not have traveled yet, which would influence the stay lift.*

The 1Q VK Tourism Dashboard will be available to view alongside the 1Q Report on Friday, October 28 on the VK website.

Journalist & Influencer Visits and Assistance:

- VK hosted influencer **Hunter Premo** and her family in July, a reschedule from 4Q. She came to Knoxville fall 2021 for one of the Sunsphere Sundays concerts, and her return visit coincided with First Friday. Having stayed at other Graduate properties, she was impressed with the family suite at the Graduate Knoxville. She has since posted a story series on Instagram, and on her own website, hunterpremo.com.
- VK assisted THE TENNESSEAN with **Katie Chang**, a freelance writer. VK arranged dinner at JC Holdway, a visit to the Sunsphere, and provided a driving tour that included stops at Mead’s Quarry at Ijams Nature Center, Fort Dickerson, Wild Love Bakehouse, and Yassin’s Falafel House. She has since had an article published in Forbes.
- VK hosted **Leonard Adkins**, writer here on assignment with **Blue Ridge Country Magazine**. His focus included Knoxville as part of a seven-state roundup of parks with hiking trails, and specifically highlighted Sharp’s Ridge and Ijams Nature Center for the Tennessee portion. His article should be published in 2023.



- VK hosted travel writers **Anja Müller** and **Sandra Wickert** in partnership with TDTD and their German representative, a visit that was rescheduled from 2021 due to COVID-19. Their East Tennessee visit focused heavily on Knoxville, with activities surrounding an American football game at UT. Additional itinerary highlights included a visit to the Sunsphere, biking through campus, and exploration of downtown as a walkable, friendly American destination.



- VK hosted **Bill Clevlen**, freelance journalist and owner of **Bill on The Road**. His primary interest was to highlight one specific aspect of Knoxville, and the Urban Wilderness was a perfect choice for his audience. In addition to visiting Ijams, Navitat, Fort Dickerson, High Ground Park, and Baker Creek Preserve, he also visited Knoxville Museum of Art, the East Tennessee History Center, and the Sunsphere. He has since had a video published on [YouTube](#) and an article posted on [Bill on The Road](#).
- VK assisted THE TENNESSEAN with **Jeff Cohen**, Editor of **Sophisticated Living Indianapolis**. VK provided a variety of resources for an independent visit and arranged a beer tasting at Knox Brew Hub.
- VK assisted THE TENNESSEAN with **Lou Harry**, on assignment with **Indianapolis Monthly**. VK arranged a visit to the Sunsphere, a glass blowing demonstration at Pretentious Glass Co, a guided hike at Ijams Nature Center, and a driving tour that included stops at Alex Haley Heritage Square and Baker Creek Preserve.

Publication Updates from Previous Visits:

- **Brett Rothmeyer** has had an article published in [SingleTracks](#).
- **Vanessa Gordon** has had an article published in [East End Taste Magazine](#).
- **Michele Gustin** has had an article published in [Fete Magazine](#).
- **Laura Mathis** has had an article published in [Evansville Living](#).
- **Susan Burns** has had an article published in [Sarasota Magazine](#).
- **Codie Gentry** has had an article published in [Relish Whiskey](#).
- **Bailey Freeman** has had an article published in [Lonely Planet](#).
- **Melissa Corbin** has had an article published in [Eater Nashville](#).
- **Aaron Millar** has had his podcast episodes posted on [tnvacation.com](#).
- **Pamela McKuen** has had an article published in [Long Weekends Magazine](#).

Media:

- **Media Assistance Provided** – VK has standing appearances on WDVX, WBIR, and WATE. Additional assistance (content, photography, itinerary suggestions, quotes, interviews, partner referrals, etc.) was provided to the following:

Knoxville News Sentinel, TDTD, AAA Living Magazine, ConventionSouth, UT Haslam College of Business, Pride Journeys, Traveling Jules, Happyly App, Atlanta Journal Constitution, AFAR Magazine, Kids Life Magazine, BlueRidge Country Magazine, Brand USA, Matador Network, TN Brew News, Blue Life, Tennessee Whiskey Trail, HGTV, and Bclip Productions.



Published pieces (both earned and paid placement) include:

- *Small Market Meetings*
- *Matador Network*
- **Earned/Unpaid Media Report** – Earned media is publicity gained through non-advertising news stories. Stories written by VK hosted travel writers are included. Values and advertising equivalency (\$) determined by Cision.
 - Total Number of Placements – 152
 - Domestic vs. International Placements
 - Domestic – 150
 - International – 2
 - Broadcast, Online, Print Placements (includes unidentified placements)
 - Broadcast – 34
 - Online – 88
 - Print – 15
 - Total Publicity Value for Earned Media – \$150,442

VISIT KNOXVILLE FILM OFFICE

The **Visit Knoxville Film Office** actively promotes Knoxville and Knox County as a premiere filming location. Recruiting motion media companies through the marketing of locations, accommodations, services, crew, and talent fosters the creation of jobs in the area, stimulates business opportunities, and generates exposure. The VK Film Office also mediates the permitting process between federal, state, and local agencies and the film industry.

The first quarter was one of the busiest to date, as the Film Office provided assistance to local production companies such as Jupiter Entertainment, Streetcar Productions, Always Abounding Media, and PopFizz. Assistance was provided for commercial productions and marketing campaigns, as well as television shows such as Atlanta Homicide, Payback, Fatal Attraction and Chopped that air on networks like Discovery ID, TV ONE, and Food Network.

The Film Office continues to work with out-of-town production companies, including a group from the UK, providing resources needed to make sure filming goes well in our city. These companies included Sonic Dog, Xizmo, and Back2Back Productions on programming ranging from true crime to Food Network promotions to filming for ESPN College Football Gameday.

The Film Office continued its successful track record of recruiting feature films to Knoxville, when in July, Euclid Origins Pictures came to shoot *ROOF*, starring Bella Heathcote and Asif Ali. The survival thriller was shot over two weeks, mostly on the roof of the Riverview Tower downtown. The project had a great write-up in Deadline Magazine, and the film will be released in 2023.



In September, the Film Office also participated in the “Making a Living in the Film Industry” panel at the Knoxville Film Festival. At the end of the month, the Film Office attended the Nashville Film Festival, participating in the “Creating in Tennessee” panel along with Tennessee State Film Commissioner, Bob Raines. The Film Office also contributed to the Maker Exchange Launch Party at the Marriott on September 16 with local filmmakers’ works and movie trailers to the event.

Previous work is now bearing fruit as several films that were successfully recruited by the VK Film Office are now premiering or enjoying their festival run. *Devil’s Hollow*, a feature film starring Shular Hensley and shot in Knoxville last summer, premiered at the Knoxville Film Festival and screened at the SOHO Film Festival in New York City. *Stranger Next Door*, a feature film shot in Knoxville last Fall premiered on TV One in July. Please see the Highlights Summary for notes on *Nothing is Impossible*, a PureFlix feature film shot last summer in Knoxville.

The feature film *Grounded* starring Robert Taylor began filming in late September in Knoxville and will wrap in late October. The film is a biopic about a doctor that befriends and eventually adopts a patient who is in a tough situation.

PARTNER PROJECTS & SPECIAL INITIATIVES

- **Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (TDTD)** – VK partners with the marketing team at TDTD to ensure consistent travel messaging. The TDTD/Brand USA “Tennessee Road Trip” video campaign produced in 4Q is now running in the UK and Canada. Additional information on FAMs, “Tennessee Music Pathways” partnerships, and various PR assistance are referenced throughout this report.
- **Heritage & History** – VK partners with the Knoxville History Project (KHP). Each quarter, KHP contributes history-based blogs to the website. VK is also proud to partner with KHP on the Downtown Art Wraps. This quarter, VK and KHP partnered on markers that will be installed at World’s Fair Park in commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of the 1982 World’s Fair. VK also partnered on production of “Knoxville: A Walking Literary Guide” brochure available free at the Visitors Center.
- **WDVX Radio** – VK partners with WDVX on the Blue Plate Special and First Friday’s Taps N Tunes. This quarter a total of 2,897 people attended these broadcasts. Of those polled at these events, the geographical attendance breakdown was as follows:
 - 2,196 Knox County
 - 309 Regional
 - 392 Out of RegionInternational guests included New Zealand, South Africa, Scotland, England, Australia, Germany, Brazil, Poland, Italy, and the Czech Republic.



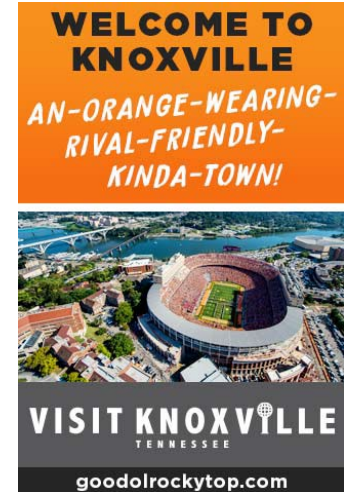
In addition to live music from Evie Andrus and her guest performers, First Fridays at the Visitors Center feature “maker moment” on air local artists. Makers for 1Q included:

- Kristen Heath of Mae Lee’s Boutique (July)
- Geff Ivey of Berry Hill Bee’s (August)
- Artist Matthew Kent Trinkle (September)

Also, during 1Q, VK partnered with Knox Brew Hub to provide a local beer option during Taps N Tunes that will highlight a different local brewery each month. For September, the local brew highlighted was “Volunbeer Lager” by Next Level Brewing Company.

“I wanted to thank the Visitors Center for extending us this invitation. We attended the Taps N Tunes event on Friday night and had a really good time. Evie is a great host and made the interview very fun. Everyone there was very welcoming. We especially loved Angie mentioning us during the TV spot on WATE. That was amazing!” - Geff Ivey

- **University of Tennessee** – VK partners with the University in a variety of ways. First Quarter kicks off football season (literally and fiscally), and VK again partnered promotionally on the Official TN Football Souvenir Program. This includes print and digital ads and notifications through the Tennessee Athletics app. For the Tennessee/Florida game, UT Athletics asked VK to provide an Instagram story series from a gameday perspective – featuring tailgating, the Vol Walk, halftime with Pride of the Southland Band, and more. The story is pinned as GAMEDAY on VK’s Instagram account.



Advertising directs to goodolrockytop.com – the gameday page on the VK site. Extending a warm welcome to visiting fans, VK is also adding customized photo frames for the Hootboard at the Sunsphere.



- **K-Town Connect** – The K-Town Connect Ambassadors have applied best practices to enhance growth and development in downtown Knoxville. Ambassadors are dedicated daily to the mission of making Knoxville a great place to live and visit. In 1Q, Ambassadors have achieved the following:
 - Hospitality assistance: This includes but is not limited to helping others use parking meters, suggesting places to eat or shop, and answering questions about events, etc. Provided assistance to 2,367 people.
 - Graffiti/Sticker/Bill Removal: Graffiti, stickers, or bills on a public fixture do not remain up for long. Ambassadors removed 324 of these.

- Litter collection: Teamwork makes the dream work. Ambassadors assisted with picking up 10,698 pieces of litter around downtown.
- Welfare check: Rain or shine, the Ambassador program will check on the vulnerable populations throughout the day. During 1Q, 749 individuals were approached to ensure their well-being. Referrals and further assistance are provided as needed.
- Directions Provided: Ambassadors have helped 2,123 people get where they need to be.
- Scooter relocation: Ambassadors have moved 1,243 scooters to a safe location.



The K-Town Connect team is a fantastic source of information and assistance in the downtown footprint. When you see their friendly team, feel free to ask for directions on where to park, eat, and have fun. The K-Town Connect Ambassador Program operates daily from 7a.m. to 3:30p.m. As the holidays and winter approach, the program will adjust efforts as needed to ensure productivity and effectiveness.

- **Additional Partner Promotion & Involvement** – VK continues to provide support to our tourism partners and is proud to do so. Highlights of this quarter include:

- Updating and printing the Divided Loyalties brochure in partnership with Civil War Roundtable.
- Partnership on the Tennessee Theatre's Broadway season (includes ad placement in playbills).
- Promoting Knox Cycle Boats in the See TN section of the fall issue of *Home and Farm*.
- Placing artsy-town styled ads in the Tennessee Valley Fair and Wing Fest programs.
- Creating and placing print and digital advertisement for KCC in *Facilities and Destinations Magazine*.

KNOXVILLE CYCLEBOATS TOURS & CRUISES

KNOXVILLE



Whether you're headed to the game or just game for a day on the water, experience the Tennessee River like never before

with Knoxville Cycleboats. Choose a cycleboat equipped with 10 cycle stations and additional seating or book a 21-foot Luxury Duffy. Tours and cruises depart from the Volunteer Landing Marina.

knoxvillecycleboats.com

- **Board & Committee Updates** – The VK Board of Directors, Marketing Committee, Sales Committee, all held meetings in 1Q. Meeting minutes available upon request.
- **Tennessee Tourism Committee (TTC)** – TTC met on Monday, August 29, 2022, via Microsoft Teams Conference. The Committee reviewed the 2021 Economic Impact Results and received TDTD updates on fall marketing, communication, sales, outreach, and Welcome Centers. The President of Visit Knoxville remains Chair of the Research Committee at the state level.

VISITOR SERVICES SUMMARY



The **Visitor Services Team** serves as the face of Visit Knoxville welcoming and assisting visitors and locals at the Visit Knoxville Visitors Center located at 301 S. Gay Street and the 4th Floor Observation Deck of the Sunsphere at World's Fair Park. The Team works with more than 70 local makers to provide a variety of quality retail items in the gift shops at both locations.

- **Visitors Center Highlights** – As the summer season winds down, the Visitors Center continues to welcome locals and travelers searching for activities to do and souvenirs to take home. First Quarter brought a multitude of events to experience, from the Where's Waldo Scavenger Hunt and Concerts in the Square to the beloved annual festivals like Knox Asian Fest and Big Kahuna Wing Fest. Our amazing local maker items and seasonal souvenirs continued to satisfy our diverse population of guests, with the Visitors Center/Sunsphere Gift Shop, grossing over \$70K in sales during for the quarter. With a festive holiday season on the horizon, the Visitor Services Team continues working with local makers and organizations to source more unique seasonal merchandise and to expand our selection of seasonal attractions and event information. Guests are welcome to make themselves right at home while shopping in the Gift Shop, organizing their stay with informational materials at the brochure wall, listening to music during WDVX's Blue Plate Special or Taps N Tunes, or learning about our charming town with intimately guided Gotta Know Knoxville tours.



- **Visitors Center Traffic** – A total of 8,996 guests were greeted in person. Top 10 states (in addition to Tennessee) checking into the Visitors Center:
 - Florida
 - New York
 - Illinois
 - North Carolina
 - California
 - Virginia
 - Ohio
 - Pennsylvania
 - Texas
 - South Carolina
- **Visitors Center/Sunsphere Gift Shop** – The Visitor Services Team continually works with Knoxville’s artists and makers to keep merchandise seasonally relevant while maintaining high quality standards and distinct style. A variety of new merchandise was added to the Gift Shop this quarter, including Tennessee Valley Pecans, fresh-from-the-design-vault UT Vols shirts, Great Smoky Mountains Activity Books for children, and much more. Many of the products debuted this quarter were produced by Knoxville makers new to VK’s Gift Shop, including Smoky Mountain Spices and The DW Designs. In addition to the Visitors Center and Sunsphere, the Visitor Services Team staffs VK retail booths at many of Knoxville’s popular events.

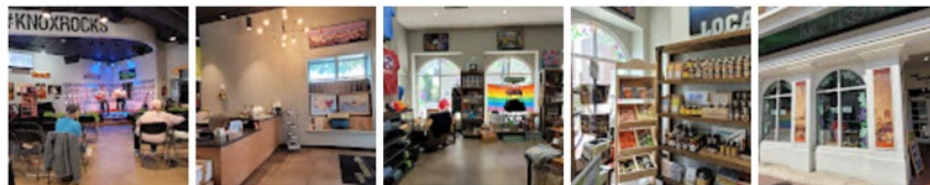


Sean Rambo

Local Guide · 125 reviews · 422 photos

★★★★★ 3 months ago

They have live music, food, drinks, information. It's really awesome in here only downside is parking which is under construction. Good place to figure out what's going on in Knoxville



- **The Sunsphere** – The Sunsphere continues to grow as one of Knoxville’s most popular attractions. Since its reopening, the VK Team has welcomed over 38K guests from all 50 states and 30 countries, including the U.S. Sunspheretickets.com has been updated to include a detailed guide to plan a visit, a FAQ page, parking, and other helpful information. Additional Sunsphere retail items have been added, including a tote bag and embroidered hat by The DW Designs, *Forever Young*, a book by Bo Roberts (President of the 1982 World’s Fair), and a Wigsphere sticker referencing The Simpsons episode that debuted in 1996.



One of the most notable developments at the Sunsphere this quarter has been the addition of Randy Tyree, Mayor during the 1982 World’s Fair. Mayor Tyree has become a wonderful addition to the Sunsphere Team, sparking interest from locals and visitors alike. Guests can visit with him weekdays from 10a.m. – 1:30p.m.

On September 11, the Sunsphere hosted the annual 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb. Participants honor fallen firefighters by climbing the steps of the Sunsphere.



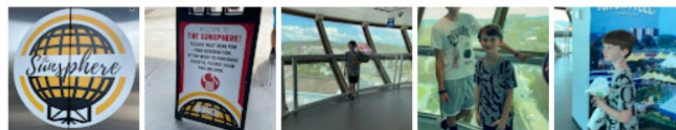
Sunsphere Tours/Partnerships — During 1Q, the Sunsphere collaborated with Make Music Knoxville and BEEhive Productions on several live music recordings filmed on the Observation Deck. Other partnerships and groups hosted were MAC Analytic Solutions, UT College of Veterinary Medicine, Tracy’s Learning Center, Haslam Scholars, UT Architecture and Design, MPI Nashville Familiarization Tour, and Innov865.



Ashley Reneé
Local Guide · 11 reviews · 32 photos

★★★★★ 2 weeks ago **NEW**

Used to be free but now you pay for. I'm okay with that as it's still not that expensive. \$5 for adults & kids under \$12 are free. They do it in tours now, so you have to wait by the elevator for your turn for the guide to come down and get you. Purchase your tickets ahead of time (although they have something you can scan there given there are still enough tickets) and make sure you're there at least 30 minutes before they close, as that's when they would be doing their last tour for the day. Awesome experience & beautiful views.



- **Visitors Guide Distribution** is a key focus for Visitor Services. Top 10 states requesting Visitors Guides:

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| ○ Tennessee | ○ Illinois |
| ○ Florida | ○ Texas |
| ○ North Carolina | ○ Virginia |
| ○ Ohio | ○ South Carolina |
| ○ California | ○ Pennsylvania |

During this quarter, there were 1,066 pageviews to the View Digital Visitors Guide page. VK distributed 1,162 printed guides based on online requests.

Bulk Visitors Guide requests come from a multitude of places (e.g., events, local groups, weddings, state welcome centers, regional distribution, etc.). In 1Q, a total of 41,463 Visitors Guides were distributed via outlets including the following:

- 10,080 through State Welcome Centers
 - 16,455 through brochure racks within the region, including attractions and hotels.
 - 14,928 distributed through other locations including Visitors Center, satellite centers, UT, and airport.
- **Visitor Information Centers** located within attractions, shops, and restaurants throughout Knoxville are supplied with visitor materials such as Visitors Guides, maps, and attraction brochures. VK connects with these partners monthly to gather input about resource needs and requests. VK provides and maintains visitor materials for displays at the Sunsphere, Knoxville Museum of Art, THE TENNESSEAN Hotel, KCC, Tommy Trent's, Outdoor Knoxville, The Pinnacle at Turkey Creek, Tennessee Theatre, Knox Brew Hub, UT Visitors Center, World's Fair Park Security Office, and the Farragut Community Center.
 - **VK Concierge Program** is a way for VK to engage our hotel properties, bring any new or updated information, and provide additional awareness of VK and its offerings, all through personal direct contact with a VK staff member. While the visits are planned quarterly, each VK Concierge relationship varies in the frequency of additional visits, based on need/request from our industry partners.

During this quarter's visits, VK highlighted the brand-new 2022 UT Visitor Guide. Each member of the concierge team provided their assigned hotels with one box of 2022 UT Visitor Guides, a bag of Orange Mint Life Savers, a flyer highlighting upcoming



festivals, the UT Football schedule on a flyer and a poster, and a laminated UT Game Day Parking Map/UT Football Permit Parking Map. VK continues to receive amazing feedback on this program and can see the return on our efforts through increased participation and engagement from our industry partners.

- **Brochure Additions** allow the Visitors Center to stay up to date with available attractions and activities. This quarter, these additions include collateral materials from:

- Knoxville Cycle Boats
- Top Golf
- The Maker Exchange
- Tennessee State Parks
- City of Farragut Map
- Sevierville Historic Walking Tour

- **Gotta Know Knoxville (GKK)**—Downtown walking tours continue to be popular for both locals and visitors. During 1Q, VK hosted:

- Spark
- Haslam Scholars
- MPI Nashville FAM Tour
- Innov865
- Monthly GKK



- **Local Donations** — VK's Visitors Center Gift Shop promotes its makers and supports the Knoxville community by creating personalized gift bags and baskets showcasing locally-made merchandise for philanthropic fundraisers, special events, and non-profit organizations. During 1Q, VK's Gift Shop donated baskets to more than a dozen organizations.