

# TOURISM WORKS

## for SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

LAKE CHARLES/SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA  
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

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Photo Courtesy of Chad Moreno



## TOP 20 LOCAL FAVORITES RESTAURANT COMPETITION



First Place - Luna Bar & Grill



Second Place - Steamboat Bill's



Third Place - Pat's of Henderson

The Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) held the seventh annual Top 20 "Local Favorites" Restaurant Competition where individuals could nominate and vote online for their favorite places to eat in Southwest Louisiana. There were 250 restaurant nominations made by the public with nearly 8,500 votes cast, the highest number of votes ever. The

restaurant that received the most votes was Luna Bar & Grill. Second place went to Steamboat Bill's followed by Pat's of Henderson for third place.

Other restaurants that made it to the Top 20, in alphabetical order are 121 Artisan Bistro, Brown Bag Café, Buffi's Peaux Boys, Casa Mañana, Darrell's, Harlequin Steaks & Seafood, Mazen's Mediterranean

Foods, Nina P's, Restaurant Calla, Saltgrass Steakhouse at Golden Nugget, Seafood Palace, Southern Spice Restaurant & Grill, Texas Roadhouse, The Villa, Toga Grill, Tony's Pizza and Walk-On's.

For more information, log onto [www.visitlakecharles.org/Top20](http://www.visitlakecharles.org/Top20) or become a fan of the CVB on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/LakeCharlesCVB](http://www.facebook.com/LakeCharlesCVB).

## INTERNATIONAL GROUPS AND MEDIA



### Gastaldi USA Familiarization Tour

The CVB hosted a group from Gastaldi USA on their Top Client Fam, visiting Alabama and Louisiana. While in Lake Charles, June 14-15, the tour enjoyed local cuisine at Luna Bar & Grill and Seafood Palace, wildlife along the Creole Nature Trail and visited the Mardi Gras Museum of Imperial Calcasieu, Crying Eagle Brewing Company, and Louisiana Spirits Distillery.



### John Bishop Media Tour

The CVB hosted New Zealand writer John Bishop at the end of May. Bishop visited Golden Nugget and L'Auberge casino resorts, 1911 Historic City Hall, the Creole Nature Trail, Bayou Rum Distillery, Mardi Gras Museum and the Historic Charpentier District. He enjoyed meals at Luna Bar & Grill, Jack Daniel's Bar & Grill, T-Boy's Cajun Grill, Panorama Music House, LeBleu's Landing and Mama Reta's.

## FROM THE DESK OF KYLE EDMISTON, PRESIDENT/CEO

Recently, the CVB released its annual report for 2018, highlighting statistics and results from the programming, campaigns, partnerships and events that occurred last year. If you are interested in getting a copy, please stop by the bureau at 1205 N. Lakeshore Drive, and we are happy to provide a beautiful edition.

At the end of 2018, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows 237,200 jobs were the result of visitor spending in Louisiana, an increase of 2,600 new tourism-related jobs over 2017. Not to mention, this number is a total of 6,700 new tourism-related jobs added since 2016. It's no surprise that tourism has a profound economic impact on Calcasieu Parish. The staff at the CVB works diligently with partners across sectors to support and improve the awareness of Calcasieu Parish as a desirable destination for groups, tours, tournaments as well as media professionals to showcase our story to their audiences. From

creative packaging and promotions to hosting events, groups and media, the staff is fully engaged in making Southwest Louisiana shine.

The good news continues with the announcement last week that Lake Charles rose to the top again, earning its ninth consecutive "Small Market of the Year" honor for best economic development performance in cities with a population range between 50,000 - 250,000. In the same article, Louisiana ranks number two in the South for economic development results as presented by Southern Business & Development magazine, on a per capita basis. Business development brings more opportunities for promotions and partnerships, and we are proud that Lake Charles and Southwest Louisiana are being recognized as a leader for progress.

The upcoming calendar is full of outstanding events, fairs and festivals. The Southwest Louisiana Hot Air Balloon Festival

is scheduled for July 19-20, as well as cultural events such as the Cajun Music & Food Festival and the Marshland Festival, also slated for July. On the horizon for the fall, the bureau is participating in the Louisiana Culinary Trails event in Atlanta, alongside other Louisiana destinations to bring our culinary traditions to Atlanta in a promotional effort to generate interest and gain media exposure. Also, look for new events with the Southern Cast Iron Cookoff to be held November 1-2 and the 2020 Olympic Trials in Boxing and National Championships this December.

The staff is looking forward to both a strong start to the fall programming and strategic planning for 2020.



*Kyle Edmiston*  
Kyle Edmiston,  
President/CEO

## TOURISM PROFESSIONALS ATTEND MARKETING COLLEGE

### Southeast Tourism Society

In May of this year, the Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) sent five delegates from our area to attend Southeast Tourism Society's Marketing College. STS Marketing College hosts tourism professionals for one week each year at the University of North Georgia. Students participate in a curriculum designed to teach marketing techniques from all facets of the tourism industry. Upon completion of the three-year curriculum, students receive a Travel Marketing Professional (TMP) certification. The CVB offers scholarship opportunities for those looking to advance their overall tourism industry knowledge.



This year's delegates are, from left to right: Krickett Racca of Crying Eagle Brewing Company, Amanda Jemison of Prosperity Hospitality Management, Taylor Meeks of Holiday Inn Express & Suites as well as Kaitlyn Gallegos and Taylor Beard Stanley, both with the CVB.

## AROUND TOWN



### The Travelers Protective Association (TPA)

The association recently held its 129th national convention at L'Auberge Casino Resort in Lake Charles. More than 100 delegates representing 18 divisions located throughout the country attended the three-day conference. "This year's convention was a wonderful celebration of our organization's accomplishments over the past year," said the TPA's Chief Administrative Officer Albert M. Shoemaker, Jr. "I am overwhelmed with the amount of support and generosity we received as we strive to improve the quality of life for others, and the communities we live in."

### Jennie Finch World Series

Southwest Louisiana hosted the Jennie Finch World Series June 19-23, with 109 teams vying for gold across 4 different age groups. With competing teams from Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Florida and New Jersey, there was an estimated attendance of 7,000 athletes and fans over the course of the event who were able to share in the excitement of experiencing the Youth Sports Capital of Louisiana!



## WHAT'S NEW?



### #GetDowntownLC

The City of Lake Charles, the Downtown Business Association and the CVB have embarked on a new initiative to generate interest in events and experiences in downtown Lake Charles by launching the #GetDowntownLC hashtag to facilitate information flow and promotions of downtown Lake Charles. The promotion includes social media graphics, flyers, and videos, as well as a downtown microsite to help visitors and residents understand all there is to see and do in the downtown area. Check out [www.visitlakecharles.org/downtown](http://www.visitlakecharles.org/downtown).