

The Bureau Bulletin

A publication of the Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau

Spring 2015

Inside this issue

Mat-Su CVB board president Cheryl Metiva encourages members to take advantage of marketing opportunities

Page 2

The Mat-Su CVB Web site will get a “responsive design” makeover to stay on the leading edge of technological trends

Page 4

International marketing efforts included attending ITB Berlin for the first time ever.

Page 6

Contact us

Bonnie Quill

Executive Director
746-5001
bonnie@alaskavisit.com

Casey Ressler

Marketing & Communications
Manager
746-5037
casey@alaskavisit.com

Justin Saunders

Membership Manager
746-5032
justin@alaskavisit.com

Neil Campbell

Administrative Manager
746-5000
info@alaskavisit.com



Peter Schadee of Knik River Lodge gives an update about his business during a previous VIC open house event. This year, the open house is May 13.

VIC Open House set for May 13

The Mat-Su Visitor Information Center opens May 13 for a summer filled with welcoming visitors and pointing them to the fun things to do in the Valley.

The annual Mat-Su CVB open house will take place at 5 p.m. May 13, giving members a chance to give a three-minute spotlight about their businesses to other members, as well as enjoy free hot dogs and hamburgers.

“The open house is a great time to get everyone caught up on new tours or products you are offering, as well as

network with other members,” said Mat-Su CVB Membership Manager Justin Saunders. “Plus, it’s a great way to get our VIC staff up to speed on your business as well.”

Lorraine Jallen is once again back to manage the VIC this summer. And with that comes her “almost world-famous” root beer floats at the open house. She’s put together her staff, which has a combined 50 years of experience working at the Mat-

See VIC, Page 3

CVB hosting Highway Neighbors

The Mat-Su CVB is hosting the 2015 Highway Neighbors conference on May 13 at the Chalet in Government Peak, and members are encouraged to register for this informative one-day event to learn about new things happening along the road system, and how it affects tourism.

The informal group meets every spring in a community along the highway system. This is the second time Mat-Su has hosted the conference, and Casey Ressler said he’s looking forward to welcoming guests from

around the state.

“We’re going to have presentations that are relevant to businesses and organizations along the road system, from Alaska Travel Industry Association forecasts to what’s going on with statewide road projects and how they impact tourism,” Ressler said.

The cost to attend the conference is just \$50, and includes lunch. You can contact

See HIGHWAY, Page 3

**2014-2015
Mat-Su CVB
Board of Directors**

Cheryl Metiva
Coming Attractions Theatres
President
275-2109
cherylm@catheatres.com

Zack Steer
Sheep Mountain Lodge
745-5121
Vice President
info@sheepmountain.com

Mark Austin
Musk Ox Farm
Secretary
745-4151
mark@muskoxfarm.org

Rick Peterson
Mt. McKinley Princess
Wilderness Lodge
Treasurer
550-7778
rpeterson@hollandamerica-
princess.com

Craig Saunders
Alaska Backcountry Adventure Tours
Past President
745-2505
craig@alaska.global

Travis Taylor
Premier Alaska Tours
Executive Committee member
279-0001
travis@touralaska.net

Karen Harris
Alaska Garden Gate Bed & Breakfast
746-2333
info@gardengatebnb.com

Roberta Caenepeel
CIRI Alaska Tourism Corp.
777-2829
robertac@ciri.com

Israel Mahay
Mahay's Jetboat Adventures
841-1307
izzymahay@gmail.com

Cole Ouellette
Rust's Flying Service and K2 Aviation
243-1595
cole@flyrustsk2.com

From the president's desk

Let the Mat-Su CVB help you in marketing your business

As we get ready to welcome the bulk of our visitors for the busy summer season, it's a good time to look back and see how the Mat-Su CVB works to attract these visitors, and how your membership can be maximized through many of the marketing plans we offer, regardless of the size of your budget.

Our largest marketing program is our Web site, and in today's technological world, investment there just makes good sense. Later this year, the Mat-Su CVB Web site will undergo a complete redesign and become "responsive" (see what this means on Page 4). This investment will ensure our site delivers the content potential visitors need, in a way they need it – whether on their smartphone, tablet or desktop computer. As a member, you can leverage our investment by enhancing your listing – you can add photos, a long description and appear at the top of the listings. This is a small investment that can pay big dividends.

This winter, the Mat-Su CVB also had a booth at the Los Angeles Travel and Adventure Show, and was in the state of Alaska booth in the Chicago show, as well as in the Visit Anchorage booth at the Boston Globe Travel Show. This spring, they attended all three in-state outdoors shows. Members had the opportunity to have their rack cards distributed at these shows for as little as \$25. That's a bargain to reach travelers across the country.

If you didn't take advantage of these opportunities this year, I encourage you to look into it next year. Check your e-mail box for the Mat-Su CVB E-Bulletins that come out every two weeks.

The Mat-Su CVB works closely with the state of Alaska, the Alaska Travel Industry Association and other destination marketing organizations in putting together familiarization (FAM) trips each summer, showcasing the area to tour operators, media and travel agents.

These influential buyers are

experiencing the product they'll ultimately sell or write about, and hosting them is another low-cost way to market your business.

In the next few weeks, you'll be receiving the advertising packets for the 2016 Visitor Guide (see story on Page 9). Again, this is another low-cost opportunity with big returns. The advertising rates are

among the lowest you'll find in Alaska. We print 100,000 guides. Display ads also are clickable on the digital version of the guide, giving you even more reach. This guide reaches high-potential visitors, travel agents, tour operators, media and much more. Every member has a complimentary listing in the guide, but you can purchase display ads that really make you stand out for as little as \$175.

The Mat-Su CVB has many other opportunities for you to market your

business.

I encourage you to contact Justin Saunders, our membership manager, to find out how you can best leverage your marketing budget for increased exposure on our Web site, in print and beyond. You don't necessarily have to have a large budget to take advantage of these opportunities either – there are programs for every budget level and mission. We all know that you simply can't just throw open your doors and expect people to show up – you have to let people know what you have to offer, and why they should stop at your bed and breakfast or take your tour.

Marketing is one of the most important things you can do to ensure your business succeeds in today's competitive marketplace, and the Mat-Su CVB is committed to giving its members the tools to stand out.

Cheryl Metiva (cherylm@catheatres.com) works for Coming Attractions Theatres and is the president of the Mat-Su CVB Board of Directors, as well as the chair of the marketing committee.



**Cheryl Metiva,
Mat-Su CVB Board President**

From the executive director

New visitor center will inspire visitors to stay longer

The Mat-Su Borough Assembly and administration organized the Mat-Su Economic Summit held Feb. 13 inviting an inclusive group of people. More than 35 participants shared and provided feedback in how we can increase our economic impact with borough policies and procedures. During the session the manager asked for suggestions and I recommended it's important to identify and create partnerships and relationships whenever possible to increase our success.

As an example, the Mat-Su CVB leverages our destination marketing efforts by cooperatively working with Visit Anchorage and the State of Alaska visitor campaign programs. We also partner with the Valdez CVB and the Kenai Peninsula Tourism Marketing Council on international visitor itineraries. By sharing booth space at outside travel and adventure consumer shows, combining our collateral in direct mailings to travel agents and travel trade, and sharing costs of providing familiarization trips to tour operators and media traveling to Alaska, we are efficient and effective with our marketing budgets.

With the development and progress of the Mat-Su Valley Gateway Visitor Center, from the beginning concept in 2007, the process has been to reach out

create strong partnerships with a variety of local and regional organizations. Many of these groups have been engaged in strategy meetings and work sessions since the Preliminary Feasibility Study was completed in 2010. Our progress has been a result of these strengthening relationships including: Alaska State Parks, Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game, Alaskans for Palmer Hill Flats, Chickaloon Village Traditional Council, Mat Su RC&D, Glenn Highway National Scenic Byway, Great Land Trust, Matanuska Greenbelt Trails, Mat-Su Borough Parks & Recreation, Mat-Su Salmon Partnership, and Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation. Additionally, we have received letters of support from Visit Anchorage and the Palmer City Council.

Increasing travel to and throughout the Mat-Su Borough will contribute and have the greatest immediate rewards to the Mat-Su economy.

The Gateway Visitor Center will inspire people to stay longer and spend more money. Fifteen years ago when I starting

working at the Mat-Su CVB our mission was to dispel and reject the slogan that visitors just drove through the Mat-Su Valley on their way to Denali. We have made great strides towards inviting visitors and providing opportunities for small businesses to thrive in tourism. From glacier trekking, to zip lining, flightseeing and visiting a dog musher's kennel, tourism is a bright spot in our future. The new Gateway Visitor Center will be our greatest asset to the visitor industry yet enabling us to grow our economy and building pride in our destination. It will be a known as a welcome center and attract new visitors and inspire them to visit our parks, museums and attractions that they didn't know existed before.

And then, our biggest marketing asset will be visitors who return home. We will have influenced and increased their visitor experience and they will be our ambassadors by word of mouth and social media sharing their Mat-Su photos and adventures. Yahoo! Mat-Su!



Bonnie Quill

Bonnie Quill (bonnie@alaskavisit.com) is the executive director of the Mat-Su CVB. This originally appeared in the April 3 edition of the Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman.

VIC: Open House

Continued from Page 1

Su Visitor Information Center. She's excited to return for another season.

"I love working at the visitor center because I get to meet visitors from all around the world and tell them all about the Mat-Su Valley," Jallen said. "It's fun to hear about where they're going on their vacation, and if we can help them out, that's great."

Members can RSVP for the open house by e-mailing Justin@alaskavisit.com. Members are also encouraged to bring a two- to three-inch stack of their current rack cards for placement in the Visitor Center this summer.

Any one who is interested in bringing a door prize is more than encouraged to do so, Saunders said.

"It's your chance to showcase your product to other members, which helps generate referrals all year," Saunders said.

HIGHWAY: Conference is May 13

Continued from Page 1

Ressler at casey@alaskavisit.com or 746-5037 to receive a registration packet for the Highway Neighbors conference, or for more information.

As of May 1, the confirmed guest speakers include representatives from the Alaska State Parks system, ATIA and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. In addition, there's a planned session for a community roundtable discussion, an open forum where issues and community updates are discussed in detail.

Attendees registered for this year's conference are coming from Fairbanks, Valdez, Tok, Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley, representing CVBs, visitor centers and private businesses.

The Highway Neighbors conference also ties in to the Mat-Su CVB open house event, which begins at 5 p.m. (see related story, Page 1). Attendees are encouraged to give updates on their businesses and communities during the open house/barbecue.

"It's a great way to let the folks in the Mat-Su know what's new around the state, because our visitors are traveling around Alaska on their vacation," Ressler said. "We're trying to create a statewide network of information that ultimately benefits our visitors and communities."

Web site to undergo responsive design makeover

When Google talks, people listen. Because if you don't, you may lose business.

That was the message to marketing professionals in late April, when Google unleashed their latest algorithm changes, which greatly impact mobile search engine results – and ultimately, site traffic and business. The change went into effect April 21, and now sites that are mobile-friendly receive higher rankings and appear higher up in the searches on mobile devices, effectively earning an increase in traffic. On the other side, if you're site isn't mobile-friendly, you'll be penalized, regardless of how much search engine optimization you perform.

So what does all that mean? Basically, if you strip away all the "tech speak," it means you need to have a Web site that looks and performs well on mobile devices. Last year, approximately 50 percent of Google searches were done on mobile phones, a staggering amount. Having a Web site that meets the demands of these users is vital in attracting traffic, and being at the top of search listings is key.

At a recent tech summit in Arizona, Mat-Su CVB staff attended a forum on search engine optimization and it put the importance into focus – 71 percent of those who search Google click on one of the first five listings, meaning mobile optimization is critical.

This summer, the Mat-Su CVB is redesigning its Web site to go to "responsive design." This important trend is not specific to the tourism industry, however. Responsive design is simply a Web site design and architecture that scales to the device that is being used. A desktop computer layout scales down and rearranges content if viewed on an iPad or other tablet, and then further scales down when viewed on a smartphone. All the content remains, but it is presented in a visually pleasing and user-friendly manner.

The goal of the algorithm change, according to Google, is to "find content that's not only relevant and timely, but also easy to read and interact with on smaller mobile screens." Responsive design fits that description exactly.

For the Mat-Su CVB, this is important

because the site is used not only for research by travelers prior to their trip, but also in-market for making decisions. By providing these in-market visitors with relevant information and appearing at the top of Google search rankings, we're able to drive these visitors to local businesses that provide what they are looking for.

Staying on top of these technological trends can be a challenge for small business owners with a limited budget. The first thing you can do to check your Web site is enter it at www.google.com/webmasters/tools/mobile-friendly to see if your site is up to speed with these changes. Secondly, you can contact your local Web site host to see if there are low-cost resources available to transition your site. Many have tools available to help you.

At that forum in Arizona, one thing the presenter from SimpleView Inc. told the group stood out – "As long as search engines exist, search engine optimization will be important," Erin Lair said. "Invest in good content, and think mobile, and think about the users first. You can't go wrong with that."

ATTRACTING MEETINGS



Karen Harris of Alaska Garden Gate B&B offers a presentation about her business to meeting planners. The Mat-Su CVB meeting planner luncheon was held April 8 in Anchorage at Kinley's, and attracted 22 top meeting planners from the Anchorage market. Ten Mat-Su CVB partners gave overviews of their businesses, and met with meeting planners to discuss how they can accommodate small meetings, corporate retreats and conventions. The Mat-Su CVB also marketed to meeting planners with a print advertisement in the convention issue of Alaska Business Monthly.

National consumer shows target independent travelers

For the first time, the Mat-Su CVB had its own booth at the nation's largest consumer travel show, the Los Angeles Travel and Adventure Expo, held in Long Beach in February.

The booth was part of the "Alaska Row" at the show, which attracted more than 30,000 people from Southern California, one of the top markets for Alaska tourism.

"It was a very busy weekend, talking to people who were interested in coming to Alaska," Mat-Su CVB Marketing Manager Casey Ressler said. "The people who attended seemed to have moved beyond the 'decision to go' stage and into the 'I'm coming, now help me plan my trip' stage, which was great."

The Mat-Su CVB continued its cooperative marketing effort with the state of Alaska booth in early February, as Bonnie Quill attended the Chicago Travel and Adventure Show in the state's booth, distributing visitor guides and information. She also attended the Boston Globe travel show in a cooperative effort with Visit Anchorage.

"These markets are important, and by participating in cooperative marketing efforts with the state of Alaska and Visit



Casey Ressler mans the booth at the Los Angeles Travel and Adventure Expo in Long Beach in February. The Mat-Su CVB also partnered with the state of Alaska and Visit Anchorage to attend two other national consumer shows, in Boston and Chicago.

Anchorage, we can stretch our marketing budget and reach as many potential visitors as possible," Ressler said.

In addition to attending the three

national consumer shows in person, the Mat-Su CVB also sent visitor guides to the Philadelphia Travel and Adventure Show, which were distributed by the state.

Outdoor shows highlight Mat-Su to residents, VFRs

With summer nearly here, the Mat-Su CVB marketed to in-state residents by having a booth at three outdoor shows this spring.

The Mat-Su Outdoorsman Show, the Great Alaska Sportsman Show (Anchorage) and the Fairbanks Outdoors Show proved to be successful in reaching the in-state market.

"The outdoor shows are great because they happen at a time when everyone is excited about summer, and they are making their plans not only for themselves, but also for their visiting friends and relatives this summer," Casey Ressler said. "It's a

perfect time to get a visitor guide in their hands, and our member brochures."

As part of a cooperative marketing effort, the Mat-Su CVB distributed 13 members' rack cards at the shows. For just \$25 a show, members have the opportunity to send their marketing materials along and be displayed in the CVB booth.

"It's a very low-cost way to get your information to a wide audience," Ressler explained.

At all three shows, the Mat-Su CVB distributed more than 1,200 visitor guides and more than 1,000 member rack cards.

Stay connected to tell our story!



www.facebook.com/visitmatsu



www.twitter.com/visitmatsu



YouTube
"yahoomatsu" channel

International efforts include ITB, Icelandair events

ITB Berlin attracts operators from around the globe

The Mat-Su CVB attended ITB Berlin, the world's largest travel show, in March, reaching influential buyers from some of Europe's largest tour operators and wholesalers.

Casey Ressler attended the show and sat in on the state of Alaska appointments along with representatives from other CVBs and private companies.

"The meetings were very productive, and we already have one operator from Europe who is going to be spending four days in the Valley, based on those meetings," Ressler said. "The quality of the appointments was outstanding, and the ability to sit down with these influential buyers and highlight the Mat-Su was outstanding."

ITB Berlin brings together nearly 30,000 suppliers and buyers from around the world. The Mat-Su CVB attended in a cooperative effort with the state of Alaska, who set up the appointments with not only tour operators, but also members of the international media.

"Many of the operators we met with already sell Alaska, and they are looking for new products to add to their itineraries," Ressler said. "This is the first time Mat-Su CVB has attended ITB, and I felt it was definitely a valuable addition to our marketing program."

For more information about the ITB event, interested people can e-mail casey@alaskavisit.com.



Roberta Caenepeel (CIRI), Jeff Johnson (Alaska Railroad) and Casey Ressler were part of the Alaska delegates at ITB Berlin.

Mat-Su well represented at Icelandair Mid-Atlantic Seminar in February

The Mat-Su CVB participated in the Icelandair Mid-Atlantic Seminar in February for the fourth year in row, continuing to build relationships with tour operators who utilize the Reykjavik-Anchorage direct flights on Icelandair.

The program is highly subsidized by Icelandair, making it one of the most affordable international marketing efforts available for Alaska CVBs and private businesses.

"The Mat-Su Valley was well represented at the Mid-Atlantic Seminar, with representatives from Talkeetna Roadhouse, K2 Aviation, Talkeetna

Alaskan Lodge and the Alaska Railroad all attending, as well as local tour operators who sell Mat-Su products," Casey Ressler said. "It was great to have such a large Mat-Su contingent highlighting our attractions and activities."

At the Mid-Atlantic Seminar, Icelandair hosts appointments between sellers and buyers, through a computer scheduling program, resulting in high quality appointments.

Icelandair is continuing the nonstop Reykjavik to Anchorage flights for the third year in 2015, and added a second flight each week, from mid-May to mid-

September.

This non-stop route from Reykjavik helps European travelers get to Alaska much quicker than traveling through the Lower 48, making Alaska more accessible than ever before to European travelers. The addition of a second flight each week is noteworthy, and a good sign there will be an increase in visitation numbers from that market in 2015.

"We've been working with this market for several years, and it's only continuing to grow," Ressler said. "The effort we've put in with FAM trips and sales missions is paying off."

ABA, NTA efforts include more than 40 appointments

The Mat-Su CVB met with more than 40 tour operators in one-on-one meetings during January while participating in the American Bus Association Marketplace event and the National Tour Association's Travel Exchange event.

The American Bus Association Marketplace in St. Louis provided an opportunity to meet with more than 20 tour operators, and Mat-Su CVB's Casey Ressler said the quality of appointments were excellent.

"Most of the operators I met with said their Alaska packages are selling very well, ahead of last year's pace, and they are excited about 2015 and beyond," Ressler said.

The ABA Marketplace focuses on motorcoach tour operators primarily, while the National Tour Association Travel Exchange is a bit more broad in terms of operators. This year, it was held in New Orleans, with Mat-Su CVB having 20 appointments.

"ABA and NTA, while both being travel trade conventions, definitely have different feels to them," Ressler said. "They are unique, but attending both is important because you meet with different companies at both events."

Both conventions schedule appointments using a software system that matches up tour operators and local destination marketing organizations such as the Mat-Su CVB. The result is appointments that are highly qualified and productive.

Leads from both shows are available to Mat-Su CVB members in an Excel spreadsheet format. For more information, interested people can contact Ressler at casey@alaskavisit.com.



Casey Ressler meets with a tour operator during the National Tour Association Travel Exchange event in New Orleans in January.

In-state marketing includes TV, radio, print, online



The Mat-Su CVB is targeting local Alaskans, as well as their visiting friends and relatives, during a five-week campaign that features print and digital advertising, as well as radio spots throughout Alaska.

The campaign promotes the Mat-Su as an ideal destination for recreational opportunities, road trips from Anchorage and as a hub of adventure. Ads will appear in the Alaska Dispatch News both in print and online, as well as run on two radio stations in the Anchorage market.

A summer television campaign on KTUU Channel 2 begins in mid-May as well, in addition to online advertising on the KTUU.com homepage.

"The in-state market is very important, and reaching them during the beginning part of the summer, when they are making plans, is vital," said Casey Ressler of the Mat-Su CVB.

Four full-color quarter-page ads will rotate during a five week run, with the "Put U in Mat-Su" headline. The award-winning ads feature popular activities such as flightseeing, fishing, ziplining and hiking in Hatcher Pass.

"The ads are very graphically oriented and appealing, and have a call to action," Ressler said. "The ads were designed by Solstice Advertising in Anchorage, and last year, the Mat-Su CVB and Solstice won an award for their visual appeal."

The ads will run from the beginning of May through the second week in June, and then again from mid-August through September.

"We're reaching Alaskans and their visiting friends and relatives in print, on radio and television and online," Ressler said. "It's important to have a multi-faceted campaign."

Sold! ExTRAVELganza a big success once again

The Mat-Su CVB Wine & Beer Tasting Travel Auction ExTRAVELganza was once again a success, as the CVB's largest fundraiser of the year attracted a large crowd at Evangelo's on April 11.

The annual MTA luggage tag raffle was also a success, as the CVB sold every \$20 luggage tag for the first time. Nancie Linley of Big Lake - a volunteer wine pourer at the auction - won the raffle and received two round-trip tickets anywhere Alaska Airlines flies.

For the first time, a beer tasting was featured along with wine, with both Arkose Brewing and Denali Brewing Company participating.

Justin Saunders of the Mat-Su CVB said the success of the auction wouldn't be possible without the continued support of the community.

"We couldn't put this fun event on every year without the gracious support from the sponsors, all the donors and those who come to the event," Saunders said. "Each year, people support this event, and we're very thankful."



A special thanks to our auction sponsors

Mat Valley Federal Credit Union

All I Saw Cookware

Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman

Princess Cruises & Tours

MTA

AK Backcountry Adventure Tours

First National Bank of Alaska

Alaska Airlines

UPS Store

Brown Jug

The Grape Tap

Visit Anchorage

Denali Brewing Company

Arkose Brewery

Alaska Denali Travel

Thank you to our auction donors

AIE Inc

Alaska Airlines

Alaska Aviation Museum

Alaska Backcountry Adventure Tours

Alaska Public Media

Alaska Railroad Corporation

Alaska SeaLife Center

Alaska Spirit Adventures

Alaska State Fair

Alaska Wildland Adventures

Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center

Alaska Zoo

All I Saw Cookware

Aramark Leisure, Denali Park Village

BIONIC Chiropractic

Caffe D'arte

CIRI Alaska Tourism Corporation

Colony Inn

Conoco Phillips Alaska, Inc.

Copper Whale Inn

Denali Brewing Company

Deshka Landing Outdoor Association,
LLC

Diamond M Ranch Resort

Fairfield Inn & Suites

H2Oasis Indoor Waterpark

Healing Path Therapeutic Massage

Hilton Anchorage

Hotel Seward

Iditarod Trail Committee

Inlet Tower

K2 Aviation

Knik River Lodge

Mahay's Jetboat Adventures

Major Marine Tours

Martin Buser's Happy Trails Kennel

Matanuska Electric Association

Mat-Su Miners Baseball

Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman

Moose's Tooth & Bear Tooth

NOVA

Palmer Golf Course

Park Connection Motorcoach

Phillips Cruises & Tours

Premier Alaska Tours

Princess Cruises

Red Robin

River's Edge Resort

Shane Lamb Gallery

Stan Stephens Glacier & Wildlife Cruises

Sunny Cove Sea Kayaking Company

Susitna River Lodging

Talkeetna Air Taxi

TEMSCO Helicopters, Inc.

The Musk Ox Farm

Town Square Art Gallery

Tracy Ressler

Turkey Red

Visit Anchorage

White Pass & Yukon Route Railroad

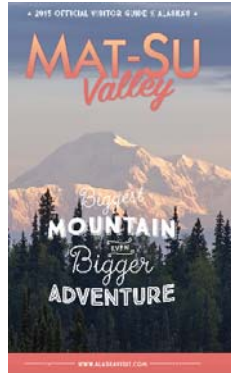
2016 Visitor Guide advertising opportunities affordable, effective

With the 2015 summer season just beginning, it's already time to start planning for 2016, and that means advertising sales for the Mat-Su CVB Visitor Guide will get under way later this month.

The guide publishes in the fall, during the busy planning season for potential visitors. Advertising packets will show up in members' mailboxes in late May.

"Advertising in the guide is an affordable way to reach 100,000 high-potential visitors," said Mat-Su CVB's Justin Saunders. "These guides go to travel agents, tour operators, independent travelers, media and more."

All Mat-Su CVB members receive a complimentary listing in the guide, including the business name, address, phone number and e-mail address. For as little as \$50 you can add your Web site



address. Other options include 125- and 175-word narratives that tell visitors more about your business. Display advertising starts at just \$170 for directory ads.

Last year, the Mat-Su CVB launched a digital version of the visitor guide on the Web site, giving advertisers even more reach for their dollars. All display advertisements include links back to the members' Web site.

After a RFP process this winter, Solstice Advertising in Anchorage was chosen to design and print the guide. They have designed the last two Mat-Su CVB guides.

"We're looking forward to another great-looking guide that gets visitors excited to visit the Valley," Saunders said.

For more information about the advertising opportunities, interested members can contact Saunders at 746-5032 or Justin@alaskavisit.com.

Get involved on a committee

Serving on a committee is a great way to get involved with the Mat-Su CVB and help shape the direction the organization takes in marketing the Mat-Su Valley.

Committees typically meet quarterly for an hour or two, so there isn't a major time commitment needed from members.

There are opportunities to serve on the membership, marketing or Internet committees.

Committee members help develop ideas that are forwarded to the full board of directors for consideration.

For more information on the committees, interested members can e-mail either casey@alaskavisit.com or justin@alaskavisit.com for more information, including upcoming meetings.

PLANNING THE FUTURE



The Mat-Su CVB Board of Directors prioritizes goals and programs for the FY2016 budget during the annual retreat in January. This year's retreat was in Palmer, including an overnight at Colony Inn, a planning session on the Alaska State Fairgrounds and breakfast at Turkey Red.

Just 35 miles north of Anchorage... **Adventure Begins**

Walk on Glaciers



Flightseeing Denali



MAT-SU

CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
Mile 35.5 Parks Hwy 3, Trunk Rd. Exit



www.alaskavisit.com

YAHOO!
Mat-Su

7744 E. Visitors View Ct.
Palmer, AK 99645

(907) 746-5000
www.alaskavisit.com