Industry Briefs

National trainer shares expertise with local hotel industry

As the year winds down many of you are trying to figure out where did the year go and how to prepare for a productive and successful new year. Shreveport-Bossier Convention Tourist Bureau heard your cry and brought in a national sales trainer Janie Wiltshire in preparation for 2010 sales effort.

Wiltshire is an international speaker who speaks 50 weeks out of the year all over the world and speaks annually for regular clients like Hilton, Choice Hotels and state tourism entities.

The training took place Dec. 15 at Boomtown Casino Hotel. The topic was “Buckle Your Seatbelt. We could be in for a turbulent ride in 2010.” Some 35 hoteliers were in attendance at the sales training and were able to take back some valuable information for themselves, as well as their staff. “I got a lot out of the training,” says Nikki Kotzian, Director of Sales at the Holiday Inn Shreveport West. “It was more of a wake-up call to staff. “I got a lot out of the training,” says Nikki Kotzian, Director of Sales at the Holiday Inn Shreveport West. “It was more of a wake-up call to staff.

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The bureau is planning to have several follow up sales training for the year all over the world and speaks annually for regular clients like Hilton, Choice Hotels and state tourism entities.

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Small Market Meetings Conference here in 2010

Shreveport-Bossier lands the first ever Small Market Meetings Conference, to be held Oct. 3-6, 2010 at the Shreveport Convention Center. The economic impact of this three-day event has the potential to generate millions of dollars in future conferences.

Quality, affordability and central location are key factors why Shreveport-Bossier was chosen from a pool of competitive bidders to host the conference. The Small Market Meetings Conference will bring 100 meeting planners and about 180 suppliers to the area who have never been here before so they can feel it, touch it, and taste it first hand.

“Oct. 3-6 dates were chosen because that’s the week of the Red River Revel Arts Festival and we wanted the opportunity to really show our Southern hospitality, our arts and culture and what makes Shreveport-Bossier: Louisiana’s Other Side so unique,” said Kim Brice, Vice-President of Convention Marketing for the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau.

Small Market Meetings is the national newspaper for smaller cities. Some 11,000 planners subscribe to the publication. Shreveport-Bossier was featured in a two-page spread in the December issue showcasing everything the area has to offer to planners.

“Hosting a conference like this is an untapped market where planners can be focused and come to one area, in particular cities that don’t get the recognition of tier one cities to market themselves and their attractions to our meeting planners,” said Joseph G. Cappuzzello, President and CEO of Small Market Meetings.

Check Out Fun Guide

ShreveportBossierFunGuide.com is your one-stop resource for everything that is fun to see and do in northwest Louisiana. This site, a great partnership between the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau and the Shreveport Regional Arts Council, provides the locals and visitors with timely information. One of the cool things about the events calendar website is that the content is driven by the community. If you have know of an event currently not listed on the site, but that is of interest to the public please log on today and add that event to this site, www.shreveportbossierfunguide.com/about/submit.php

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Calendar of Events

1/1-9 Monster Nation. CenturyTel Center.
1/10-16 Bossier City Invitational PBR. CenturyTel Center.
1/15 Krewe of Elders Ball. American Legion Hall - Shreveport.
1/16 Krewe of Aesculapius Grand Ball. Shreveport Convention Center.
1/16 Krewe of Artemis Grand Ball VII - Fraternity Fairtimes.
1/22 Krewe of Justinian Grand Ball. Horsehoe Casino & Hotel.
1/22 Krewe of Sabak Grand Ball VII.
1/23 Krewe of Sabak Mardi Gras Parade. Fairgrounds Field.
1/23 The "Mighty" Krewe of Centaur's Grand Ball – "As Southern As It Gets". Shreveport Convention Center.
1/24-11 Annual World Religion Day (Shreveport-Bossier at Highland Center).
1/25 Krewe of Gemini Grand Ball. Shreveport Convention Center.
1/25 Harlem Globetrotters. CenturyTel Center.
1/25 The "Mighty" Krewe of Centaur's Float Loading Party.
1/26 Krewe of Cotton Country Parade.
1/27 The Mighty Krewe of Centaur’s Mardi Gras Parade – "As Southern As It Gets".
1/27 Krewe of Gemini Float Loading Party.
1/27 Krewe of Highland Ball Masquez. Randy T. Moore Center.
1/27 Shreveport Blues Festival. CenturyTel Center.
1/27 Krewe of Gemini Mardi Gras Parade.
1/27 Martina McBride with Trace Adkins. CenturyTel Center.
1/27 Krewe of Highland Mardi Gras Parade.
1/27 Aesculapius Bridge Closing Ceremony.
1/27 Krewe of Sabak Mardi Gras Fat Tuesday Children's Parade. Louisiana Boardwalk.
1/29-22 Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Basketball Tournament.

If you would like a complete list of events, log on to www.shreveportbossierguide.com.

Your Bureau at Work For You

Sheeport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau names Nishia Livingston its new Public Relations/Social Media Manager.

Prior to joining the tourist bureau, Nishia worked as a copy editor for The Times of Shreveport. During her three-year stint with The Times, she was instrumental in editing and designing various publications and developed a working relationship with industry journalists and freelancers.

Her new role will consist of generating editorial/social media features in local, regional, national, and international markets employing a number of strategic public relations tactics.

Kim Brice, VP Convention Marketing, traveled to Chicago in December to attend DMAI's last meeting of the year. Brice is on the Sales and Marketing Committee and the focus of the meeting was on empowering MINT, which is the networking tool for all of the member DMO’s.

While in Chicago, she also attended the Shreveport Sleeves, which was very informative, as well as an educational opportunity. CEOs, VPs, and sales managers, came together from bureaus all over the U.S. to brainstorm on how to better reach and service meeting and convention clients.

The United States Specialty Sports Association has selected Shreveport-Bossier to host a USSSA Boys 14 and Under Baseball Super NIT on March 26. The tournament will be played at Cargill Park in Shreveport and Tinsley Field in Bossier.

The Shreveport-Bossier Convention Tourist Bureau worked with Shreveport Public Assembly and Recreation (SPAR) and the Shreveport Regional Sports Authority in securing an event of this magnitude.

continuation: Major Conference Coming

“We’re absolutely thrilled to have this event, but even more so at the opportunities it presents for the future. Nothing sells and promotes a city quite like having the key decision makers here in person. They can fully experience Shreveport for themselves rather than just hearing a presentation,” said Sam Vossin, General Manager SMG/Shreveport Convention Center.

The Shreveport Convention Center and Hilton Shreveport were integral partners in securing this conference. Diania Douglas, tourist bureau regional convention sales manager, and Brandy Warren, Hilton Shreveport sales manager attended the Affordable Meetings TradeShow in Washington, D.C. in May 2009. At this conference they learned about the potential to host this conference and immediately put together a stellar proposal.

Most of the planners for the conference are expected to come in from all over.

Other 2010 Conferences

- Amateur Softball Association – 1,000 delegates, 2,270 rooms
- South Central Family Motorcoach Association – 800 plus RVs; 1,500 people
- Delta Kappa Alpha Sorority - 2,767 rooms; 2,000 delegates
- Delta Kappa Gamma – 600 room nights; 400 people
- Women of Faith – 700 room nights; 14,000 people

“There is no time like the present to see all we have to offer.”

Mardi Gras Bash promises great fun for clients

It’s Mardi Gras time! The most decadent party of the South will rock your socks off starting, Jan. 9, with the Twelfth Night Celebration. The party doesn’t stop there. The momentum and excitement for more outrageous over-the-top continues with balls and parades from then until mid-Feb. The big crescendo is the two major parades weekends starting first with Krewe of Centaur’s Parade, “As Southern As It Gets”, Feb. 6. The parade starts at 4 p.m. on the corner of Lake Street and Clyde Fant Parkway in downtown Shreveport.

Group tours, tour operators, media and meeting planners will be attending the tourist bureau’s annual Mardi Gras Bash that promises big fun. These clients will get a taste for Shreveport-Bossier’s food, music, and Mardi Gras.

“This is a time when we bring clients in to showcase all the assets our community has to offer meeting planners, media and tour operators for future business,” said Stacy Brown, tourist bureau president.

The tourist bureau also will host a Bash during the parade - Krewe of Gemini Parade, “Gemini Goes Fiction”, Feb. 13. The industry is invited to participate. Please contact Erica Howard, group sales manager, if you are interested in volunteering at the event, 222-9331 ext. 116 or ehoward@sbcctb.org.