**Travel Talk**

**News from Louisiana’s Other Side - Shreveport-Bossier Convention & Tourist Bureau**

**May-June 2010**

**Shreveport-Bossier to Celebrate Tourism Awareness Month in May**

Is tourism important to Shreveport-Bossier? You decide: the local industry employs more than 37,000 people and saves each Caddo-Bossier Parish household $190 in taxes annually.

May 8-16 is National Travel and Tourism Week. The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau will host events to raise awareness of the importance of tourism and to honor those who help build a strong industry.

May 5, the bureau will host its annual Hospitality Olympics. This day of games builds teamwork, as tourism employees compete against each other in games. May 13 is the annual P.R.I.D.E. (Proud Residents Involved in Developing the Economy) Awards Banquet at Horseshoe Riverdome. The event recognized the outstanding individuals.

**Debbie Coleman Receives Award**

Debbie Coleman, general manager at the Clarion Hotel, was selected the 2009 GM of the Year by the Roberts Hotel Group. The Clarion also was given a Readers Choice Award from The Times as Best Convention Hotel.

**Register for Small Market Meetings**

Register today for Small Market Meetings Conference and Reverse Trade Show, October 4-6 at the Shreveport Convention Center. This is the first ime for this conference to be held in Shreveport-Bossier. Some 100 meeting planners that arrange meetings in destinations like Shreveport-Bossier will be here! By registering as a vendor you may qualify to win a $100 shopping spree courtesy of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau. Register online for the conference at www.smallmarketmeetings.com. To learn more about this conference contact Diana Douglas at ddouglas@sbctb.org.

**Tourism Challenge to Start**

The second Tourism Challenge kicks off May 3. This initiative of the bureau, the Shreveport-Bossier Attractions Association, the Shreveport-Bossier Hotel and Lodging Association and the Louisiana Restaurant Association draws the industry out and reminds them they can have fun at home! About 60 tourism partners offer discounts and free admission for participants. A special passport with details will be issued to participants. They have 13 days to complete the challenge. Register today for Small Market Meetings Conference and Reverse Trade Show, October 4–6 at the Shreveport Convention Center. This is the first ime for this conference to be held in Shreveport-Bossier. Some 100 meeting planners that arrange meetings in destinations like Shreveport-Bossier will be here! By registering as a vendor you may qualify to win a $100 shopping spree courtesy of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau. Register online for the conference at www.smallmarketmeetings.com. To learn more about this conference contact Diana Douglas at ddouglas@sbctb.org.

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- John Hubbard, Chairman, Bossier Chamber of Commerce
- Frederick Henson, Vice Chairman, African-American Chamber of Commerce
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- Joyce Jeffrey, Bossier Mayor’s Office
- Kaisha Shields, Shreveport-Bossier Hotel Lodging Assn.
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- Jim Johnson, Bossier Rural Municipalities
- Debra Hamilton, Bossier Office of Community Services
- Sarah Parsons, Shreveport-Bossier Hotel Lodging Assn.
- Jerry Kolmaik, Louisiana Restaurant Assn.
- Thaddeus Pugh, Shreveport Mayor’s Office
- Valerie Guenner, Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce
- Rick Christian, Attractions Assn.

**Dates to Remember:**

- **Hospitality Olympics**: May 5, 9 a.m., Louisiana Boardwalk.
- **P.R.I.D.E. Awards Banquet**: May 13, 6:30 - 9 p.m., Riverdome at Horseshoe Casino.
- **Attractions Assn.**
  - TBA, Information: Gina Hobbs, 461-0625.

**Shreveport-Bossier is honored to host the 91st annual conference of the National Beauty Culturists League, Inc. (NBCL) a cosmetology trade associa
tion, July 24-31. The group draws its membership from 42 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, Africa, and the Caribbean.**

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Calendar of Events

May/June

May 4 - 6 - Regional Sales Call
May 8 - 10 - Financial Operations Conference
May 11 - 13 - Louisiana North Coalition
May 18 - 21 - Hospitality Olympics
May 25 - 27 - Southern Hills Park and Community
May 27 - 30 - Everything Expo

Your Bureau at Work For You

Product Development Manager Kathy Melancon and Vice President of Communications Brandy Evans, joined forces with Arlena Acrey and Pam Glorioso of the Shreveport-Bossier Film Office, as well as Rocky Rockett with the Bossier Economic Foundation for the Association of Film Commissioners International conference, April 12-17 in Santa Monica, Calif.

Leisure Sports Sales Manager Angie Costakis and Vice President of Tourism Kelly Wells attended the National Association of Sports Commissions Sports Event Symposium in Columbus, Ohio, April 13-15. This annual event is the sport industry’s leading networking conference. Kelly and Angie joined other professionals in the sports event industry for exceptional programming, networking, the professionals in the sports event industry for the annual conference. Kelly and Angie joined other professionals in the sports event industry for exceptional programming, networking, the NASC Sports Marketplace, and more. Mary Ann Rice with the Shreveport Regional Sports Authority also attended.

Kelly joined Tourism Sales Manager Erica Howard at the annual Travel South Conference.

The bureau would like to announce its first WOW winner - Susie Q from Holiday Inn Express - West. The WOW Training program, initiated by the bureau in 2009, was recently modified to one hour of training that targets front line employees at hotels, restaurants and attractions. Training focuses on three simple, but key factors in hospitality which include going beyond the expected, winning over the customers’ hearts and personal ownership. The bureau has trained eight partners signed up to take advantage of this free training program. The WOW winner - Susie Q was the first WOW Employee of the Month from Holiday Inn Express - West. She won a $100 Visa Gift Card for her outstanding service.

If you would like to sign up for training, please email Kathy Melancon, product development manager at kmelancon@sbctb.org.

Convention Calendar

Date | Event | Hotel
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May 2 | American Rose Society | Hilton Hotel Shreveport
May 4 - 6 | 2010 Spring Convention and Rose Show | Holiday Inn Bossier City
May 8 - 10 | US Constabulary Association Outpost 7 | Louisiana Boardwalk
May 8 - 20 | 2010 Reunion | Bossier Economic Foundation
May 24 - 30 | Southwestern Athletic Conference - SWAC | DiamondJacks Casino and Resort
May 25 | Blackhwod Data Services | Bossier Economic Foundation
May 28 - 29 | Airline High School Reunion | Louisiana Boardwalk
June 6 - 11 | Society of American Travel Writers | DiamondJacks Casino and Resort
June 15 | Professional Insurance Agents of Louisiana, Inc. | Homewood Suites
June 22 | Campaign to End AIDS | Century College
June 22 - 24 | School Nutrition Association of Louisiana | Hilton Hotel Shreveport, Shreveport Convention Center
June 23 - 27 | Church of Christ Holiness USA | Louisiana Boardwalk
June 28 - 30 | Louisiana Primary Care Association | Hilton Hotel Shreveport

Media Tours Generate National Exposure

From May 27-30, SBCTB will host its Movies, Mudbugs, Oh My. My tour. All media tours are done to promote Shreveport-Bossier as a premier tourist destination. The May tour is always popular because it’s unique and fun. This year, writers from Southern Living Magazine, Chile Pepper Magazine and the Philadelphia Tribune just to name a few will be in attendance.

Also, Shreveport-Bossier is hosting the Society of American Travel Writers Canadian Chapter Meeting, June 7-10, for the first time. Between 30 and 50 journalists will be here to enjoy pre- and post-tours to various parts of Louisiana.

“We are excited to be hosting this conference,” said Stacy Brown, president. “We know that once they come they will find a wealth of story ideas about Louisiana’s Other Side and go back and tell their audiences what a great place this is to live, play and work.”

DiamondJacks’ Casino Resort is the host hotel for the meetings and media marketplace. Some of the highlights of the various tours will include tours from Holiday Inn Express West, H Hotel Shreveport and Holiday Inn Bossier City.

With the Shreveport-Bossier Film Office, they provided Susie Q, the first WOW Employee of the Month for having almost two dozen comment cards completed by her guests in the last two weeks of February. She won a $100 Visa Gift Card for her outstanding service.

For a complete list of upcoming conventions visit www.shreveport-bossier.org/meetings/calendar