

Industry Briefs

Board of Directors

The **Homewood Suites by Hilton® Shreveport** announced it was recently honored with the **Connie Pride Award of Merit** at the brand's annual conference, marking the second consecutive year the hotel has won this award. The Connie Pride Award of Merit recognizes the top 10 percent of all Homewood Suites in the country for overall service and quality of hotel.

Nikki Kotzian will be moving from the **Holiday Inn Holidome** to take a new position at the **Hilton Garden Inn in Shreveport**.

The **Hampton Inn Shreveport Airport** recently announced **Stephen Boyter** as the new sales manager. Boyter, a Shreveport native, began as a front desk agent at the hotel and is currently a student at Louisiana State University-Shreveport majoring in Finance.

The **Sleep Inn and Suites Medical Center** has contracted **April Lawrence** with SOR Consulting for three months to assist with the property's sales and marketing efforts. Lawrence, previously sales manager for the Toledo Bend Resort and a current board member at the Louisiana Travel Promotion Association (LTPA), will assist in developing standard operating procedures, a marketing plan and establishing the property's sales department.

Log on to www.shreveport-bossier.org/partners for industry events and updates



Convention & Tourist Bureau
629 Spring Street
Shreveport, LA 71101



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*Appointing
Organization



news from shreveport-bossier convention & tourist bureau

TRAVEL TALK

May - June 2013

Shreveport-Bossier Celebrates Tourism Awareness Week

Tickets to the event are \$40 per person or \$350 for a table of ten. To purchase tickets, visit www.2013PrideAwards.eventbrite.com.



During Tourism Awareness Week, the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau will host the annual P.R.I.D.E. Awards Gala, 6:30 p.m., May 9, at Sam's Town Hotel and Casino.

The first full week of May is annually recognized as National Travel and Tourism Week, a tradition which was first celebrated in 1984. Tourism is a vital industry in Louisiana. According to the Research Department of the U.S. Travel Association's 2011 Study, the Louisiana tourism industry has an economic impact of \$1.2 billion in tax revenue for federal, state, and local governments. The Center for Business and Economic Development at the Louisiana State University's 2010 study cited Caddo and Bossier parishes tourism industry employs approximately 37,000 people and have an economic impact of \$21 million in direct tax revenue.

One of the ways that the Shreveport-Bossier area is getting involved with the celebration set for May 4-12, is hosting a news conference for Lieutenant Governor Jay Dardenne 7:45 a.m., Wednesday, May 8 in front of Margaritaville Casino and Resort. The Lieutenant Governor will address the economic benefits of tourism.

The other important event that is organized by the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau is the PRIDE Awards Gala the next day at Sam's Town Hotel & Casino. The tourist bureau recognizes outstanding work of individuals in the hotel, casino, attraction, restaurant, performing arts and transportation businesses.

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Dates to Remember:

P.R.I.D.E Awards

May 9, 6:30-9 p.m., Sam's Town Hotel and Casino

Hospitality Breakfast

June 5, 8 a.m., Horseshoe Casino and Hotel
July 3, 8 a.m., Holiday Inn West

Louisiana Restaurants Association

June 11, 2:30 p.m., Reinhart
July 9, 2:30 p.m., Ernest Orleans Restaurant

Seminar Set to Help Attractions Survive and Thrive

The Shreveport-Bossier Attractions Association received great responses from the survey sent out to guests after the first quarter seminar on Experiential Tourism. Among the responses was a consistent request to learn more about the business side of operating an attraction. As a result, the next seminar, "Build Your Attraction's Revenue and Financial Strength," is scheduled 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., Monday, May 13 at the newly-opened Central ArtStation located at 801 Crockett Street, Shreveport.

This seminar will focus on product development, generating additional revenue sources, financial strategies, budgeting and fundraising. Brian Carr, regional vice-president of finance at Caesar's Entertainment, and Judy Randall, president and CEO of Randall Travel Marketing, will be the featured speakers.

Carr's presentation will educate attractions on financial tips and strategies. He will focus on advertising, cost structures, return on investment and more.

Randall will present top trends in attraction development, examples of attractions that have added lucrative experiences and products, and the best "how-to" tips from a seasoned travel professional. Randall said of the presentation, "All attractions are looking for ways to survive and thrive. This seminar is intended to show you how to take your attraction to the next level."

For more information or to R.S.V.P., please email Deann Jewell, communications coordinator at the tourist bureau, at (318) 429-0645 or djewell@sbctb.org.

This seminar is free. Lunch will be provided.

"Separated by the Red River with a neon-lit bridge, Shreveport-Bossier, Louisiana is where cowboy and Cajun come together..." - Southern Traveler

May/June

- 5/3 Disney on Ice: Dare to Dream, Centurylink Center
- 5/4 20th Annual Pink Party, Shreveport Convention Center
- 5/4 Cinco de Mayo, Festival Plaza
- 5/4-5/5 Le Tour des Jardins, Pioneer Heritage Center-LSUS
- 5/4-10/26 Shreve Town Ghost Walk, Caddo Parish Courthouse
- 5/6 Poke Salad Festival, Blanchard, LA off Highway 1
- 5/18 Chimpanzee Discovery Day: Endangered Species, Chimp Haven
- 5/18 Music in the Park, Southern Hills Park and Community Center
- 5/23-26 30th Annual Mudbug Madness Festival, Festival Plaza
- 6/1-8/31 Shreveport Farmer's Market, Festival Plaza
- 6/1 Cross Lake Floatilla, American Legion Hall-Shreveport
- 6/1 Daryl Hall and John Oates, Riverdown at Horseshoe Casino and Hotel
- 6/10-14 Summer Fun Bowling Camp, Holiday Lanes
- 6/15 Chimpanzee Discovery Day: Me and My Dad, Chimp Haven
- 6/18 The Addams Family, The Strand Theatre
- 6/20-23 Louisiana's Weirder Side: Downtown Paranormal Fest, Downtown Shreveport
- 6/21 Let the Good Times Roll Festival, Festival Plaza

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Your Bureau at Work



Stacy Brown, SBCTB president (second from left) and Shelly Johnson, president of the Lake Charles CVB (first on the left)

Stacy Brown, tourist bureau president, recently attended the National Scenic Byway Foundation Retreat in Denver, CO. They discussed committee restructuring, alternate means of funding, membership restructuring and how to grow the byway system. "The National Scenic Byway Foundation has been in existence for several years, but has significantly evolved over the last couple of years because of budget cuts at the federal level," said Brown. Recently, the National Scenic Byway Resource Center's federal program was disbanded, leaving the Foundation's board to oversee the operation of some of the resource center programs. Brown, the only state scenic byway representative on the board, said, "Scenic byways are significant because they appeal to locals and out-of-town visitors. For example, the GPS ranger tour of the Boom or Bust Byway was featured in the *Shreveport Times* recently, and we saw an increase in GPS check-outs from the bureau's downtown office. The scenic byways become sources of income and economic development for rural communities."

Tourist Bureau to Launch Dallas Marketing Campaign

Leisure travel makes up approximately 69 percent of visitation to Shreveport-Bossier, according to the latest Ad Conversion Study conducted by Destination Exploration in December 2012. The company sampled some 37,723 print and online advertisement leads from 2011. To capitalize on that interest in leisure travel primarily from the Dallas/Ft. Worth market, the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau is launching a summer cooperative marketing campaign for area casinos and partners.

The multimedia campaign features radio, digital billboards, and online web banner advertising and retargeting. It also features social media advertising to drive web visitation and public relations efforts to garner regional publicity of area festivals, casino happenings and events.

The tourist bureau has made a significant investment into this effort to remind Dallas visitors

Kim Brice, vice-president of convention marketing and bureau services, has organized a sales blitz scheduled for May 21-23. The tourist bureau and local hotel partners will be making sales calls to local businesses that plan regional and national association and trade meetings. "We will also be searching for people who are members of state associations who will help us to hopefully attract more state association business to Shreveport-Bossier," said Brice.

Brice is also coordinating three local familiarization tours set for June 14. The themed tours will include an historic tour, adventure tour and a haunted tour of Shreveport-Bossier. All tours will be open to potential meeting, convention, conference and reunion planners interested in planning an event in Shreveport-Bossier.

Erica Howard, tourism sales manager, traveled to Oklahoma City, OK for sales calls, March 19-22. "There has been an increase of groups traveling from Oklahoma. Several are interested in our spring, Mardi Gras and Louisiana Holiday Trail of Lights products," said Howard.

Future sales calls will be made in Mississippi in mid-May. In addition, she has booked a familiarization tour with Kaleo Tours tentatively set for September.



The Tourist Bureau Needs Hotels' and Attractions' Help on Market Research

The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau has retained Young Strategies, Inc. to complete a destination analysis that includes a profile of the various types of visitors to Shreveport-Bossier and a strategic plan for the destination. Travel industry partners participation is crucial to the completion of this research. Here's how you can help:

- Please display the acrylic stand in a prominent location where visitors will see it. Young Strategies has provided this to collect email addresses from visitors at a sample of local hotels and attractions.
- Ask your front desk staff to encourage visitors to provide their email address on the email collection card, drop in a business card, or text "Shrevebo" to the number provided on the stand. Please help your front-desk staff understand the importance of this. Visitors that participate can win \$100.

- Shreveport-Bossier visitors who provide their email address will receive an online survey in the weeks following their visit to Shreveport-Bossier. The survey will ask for their input regarding their recent visit and their perceptions of Shreveport-Bossier as a travel destination. The survey will not ask them to rate your business.

Additionally, Young Strategies can also provide hotels and attractions with a unique link to the online survey that could be sent to your database of recent visitors (prior year). If you would like to learn more about sending the survey direct to your database please contact Amy Stevens, at amy@youngstrategies.com or direct at 704-519-9043. Young Strategies will share your data with you.

"We are committed to providing an aggressive, research based marketing program to inspire more people to visit our city and your business," said Stacy Brown, tourist bureau president. "Your participation is critical as it helps us reach as many visitors as possible."



Display boxes will be placed at participating hotels and attractions to collect visitor information to complete market research.

LSAE Convention a Success CONVENTION CALENDAR

The Louisiana Society of Association Executives (LSAE) hosted their 2013 Annual Convention at Horseshoe Casino in Bossier City, Feb. 20-22. 91 attendees, including executives, professional meeting planners and

suppliers, spent three days networking and doing business in Shreveport-Bossier.

Highlights of the conference included a special welcome from Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne and educational breakout sessions on a variety of topics relevant to modern executives. Kim Brice, VP of convention marketing for the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, credits the efforts of Convention Sales Manager Suzanne Manfredi, whose hard work resulted in the conference returning to

"Manfredi has done an excellent job in garnering relationships over the years with the executives who attended this year's conference,"

said Kim Brice, VP of convention marketing

Shreveport-Bossier for the first time in six years.

"We offered a tremendous amount of incentives to this group," Brice said. "Manfredi has done an excellent job in garnering relationships over the years with the executives who attended this year's conference."

DATE	EVENT
May 2-5	Gideons International Louisiana State Convention
May 6	Louisiana Missionary Baptist Meeting
May 11	MAYHEM 3
May 15-18	LSUHSC Internal Medicine Conference
June 2-6	Food and Equipment Expo
June 13-15	National Association of University Women Conference
June 16-20	CME Conference and Leadership School
June 26-29	American Association of Professional Landmen Meeting

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