The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau’s 2014 Board of Directors’ Chairman will be Jerry Kolniak and Vice-Chairwoman will be Sherry Stuckey.

Kourtney Washington has left her position as Governmental Affairs and Special Events Manager at Sci-Port: Louisiana’s Science Center and is now the Director of Happy at ANEC Federal Credit Union.

The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau hosted the Travel Alliance Partners Conference in 2013 at Sam’s Town Casino.

Julie Thomas is the new communications intern for the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, as well as a senior at LSU Shreveport. Julie is studying public relations and is projected to graduate this May.

Local Chef Panderina Soumas will be featured in the January edition of Louisiana Kitchen and Culture Magazine. Public Relations/Social Media Manager Chris Jay wrote the feature article.

Shreveport-Bossier Hosts Inaugural Rendezvous South, Dec. 2-4

Sponsored by ConventionSouth Magazine, Rendezvous South was created as a one-stop-shop for meeting planners to speak directly with decision makers from SMG-managed facilities, host hotels and convention and visitor bureaus. Rendezvous South partner cities include Shreveport-Bossier, Baton Rouge and Kenner, La.; Savannah, Ga.; Beaumont and Irving, Tx.; and Jackson, Ms.

Meeting planner attendees agreed to host conferences in at least two of the participating cities, utilize at least 45,000 square feet of convention space, and use at least 500 hotel rooms.

Our ultimate purpose is to create future convention business that will bring more visitors and events to the Shreveport-Bossier area,” said Stacy Brown, Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau president.

A follow up survey was sent to the suppliers and planners. Nearly 70% of the planners said they would consider hosting a future meeting in Shreveport-Bossier.

“My previous experience with the convention and tourist bureau has been great and anytime I have a client that I think would be a good fit, I would definitely consider bringing them your way,” said Tommy Krown, a professional planner with Arrowhead Conferences and Events.

For most Dallasites, Shreveport-Bossier is a popular destination for a few days’ gambling, but there’s more to enjoy there than just the casinos…

Holiday Trail of Lights with a 20-foot tree and even a little fake snow. (You can even head over to the newest casino, Margaritaville, which opened in June, or enjoy shopping at the outlet stores just in time for your Christmas list.)

In December 2013, the sports commission landed another new event for the area. Regions Archery Tournament is scheduled for Feb. 20-23 at Cypress Black Bayou Recreation Area. The planner, Richard Pintle, attended the first-ever Rendezvous South Conference, Dec. 2-4 at the Shreveport Convention Center.

Finally, the sports commission is lending its assistance and support to the annual Martin Luther King Basketball Tournament sponsored by SPAR, Feb. 7-9 at various SPAR gymnasiuams. To get involved as a sponsor or volunteer with the sports commission contact Kelly Wells at kwellis@bbrt.org.

Sports Commission Starts New Year in Full Swing

The first quarter of 2014 is in full swing for the Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission. The organization is set to host two new exciting events and assist with returning events.

The CABOLA 2nd Annual Karl Mitchell Memorial Lacrosse Tournament, set for Jan. 11-12 at Cargill Park, will feature 35 high school teams. For more information, visit www.cabola.com.

Regional Archery Tournament, Dec. 2-4 at the Shreveport Convention Center.

Outlook for 2014

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Submit your events on the Fun Guide for FREE

Mardi Gras Bash a Favorite for Large Groups

Shreveport-Bossier's Mardi Gras Bash is a favorite for large groups. Feb. 22 marks the eighth year of the bash and this year the event was named a Top 100 Event by the American Bus Association. Motorcoach groups are expected from throughout the region. Festivities begin at 1:30 p.m. The Krew of Centaur parade starts at 4 p.m.

“Mardi Gras in Shreveport-Bossier is simply the best,” said Steven Foster, activities officer for the American Eagle HOG Chapter. “For several years, our friends at the Shreveport-Bossier CBE have made American Eagle

Erica Howard, tourism sales manager, is busy booking group tours for the 8th Annual Mardi Gras Bash, hosted by the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau.

New Reunion Workshop to Create One-Stop Shop for Family, Class, Military Reunion Planners

Planning a reunion or know someone who is? The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tour Bureau and its partners are hosting the Shreveport-Bossier Family Reunion Workshop, Saturday, Feb. 8, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Lakehouse and Event Center at Villagio in Bossier City. Our goal is to target family, class and military reunion planners who are on the cusp of making their summer plans and connect them with local suppliers such as hotelsiers, attractions, caterers and others,” said Kevin Flowers, who handles these groups for the bureau. Kevin said the bureau hopes to create a one-stop shop for local planners and demonstrate the ease of working with the bureau and its partners to create successful and memorable events. It will be a 101-style seminar. The workshop includes a “How to Plan a Reunion” presentation and a meet-and-greet with hospitality industry partners who focus on reunions.

There are about 30 spots for suppliers to showcase their product or service for a nominal fee of $50. Suppliers can go online to www.reunionplanningworkshopvenue.com to register. This will be on a first-come, first-served basis. An estimated 50 planners are being invited at no charge.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Kevin Flowers, tourism service specialist, at kflowers@btcb.org. Admission is free to anyone who is planning a reunion in Caddo or Bossier parishes, but seating is limited to two guests per reunion. A complimentary lunch will be served. Reservations are required. www.reunionplanningworkshopvenue.com to register. This will be on a first-come, first-served basis. An estimated 50 planners are being invited at no charge.

DATE EVENT
Jan. 8-10 2014 Orthopedic Surgery Doctors
Jan. 20-23 2014 American College of Physicians Louisiana Chapter
Jan. 21-26 2014 World of Wheels
Jan. 24-26 2014 Mid-Winter Conference
Feb. 2-4 2014 MLK Basketball Tournament
Feb. 9 USA Daithon Mid-South Regional Frost Yer Fanny
Feb. 20 Regions Archery Tournament
Feb. 21-22 2014 Environmental Education State Symposium
Feb. 24-28 2014 NBAE Mid-Winter Board Meeting National Basketball Convention of America
Feb. 24-March 2 2014 KCACTF Region VI Festival
Feb. 27-March 2 2014 Top Ladies of Distinction

The Mikado, RiverView Theater
Bowl for the Cure, Holiday Lanes of Chicago,” the Strand Theatre
DiamondJacks Casino and Resort
Margaritaville Resort Casino
Great Raft Brewing, the Shreveport-Bossier area’s first local brewery tasting room, opened to the public, Dec. 20. Following the grand opening, the tasting room will be open on a regular basis on Thursdays and Fridays, 4-8 p.m., and Saturdays, 12-8 p.m. Brewery tours will be available beginning in early 2014. Great Raft Brewing is located at 1251 Dalzell Street in Shreveport.

The Great Raft tasting room will initially feature three flagship beers with an additional five taps devoted to a variety of one-off and specialty beers. The 2,500-square-foot tasting room seats up to 75 patrons and is part of Great Raft’s brewing operations located in Shreveport’s Fairfield Historic District.

“The Great Raft tasting room will provide a unique experience for beer lovers, and it gives us the opportunity to engage directly with the community about our beers. We are also excited to use this space as a way to increase the awareness and enjoyment of a variety of beer styles,” said Lindsay Nations, vice president and co-founder of Great Raft Brewing. Great Raft’s current beer lineup includes a black lager named Reasonably Corrupt™, a pale lager named Southern Draught™, an American pale ale named Commotion™. A house saison will soon be available, and other specialty beers will be announced as they are released.

Erica Howard, group tour sales manager, conducted a familiarization tour of 38 group leaders and tour operators from Oklahoma, Nov. 5-9. The group visited Shreveport-Bossier, Monroe-West Monroe, Alexandria, Natchitoches, Gibsland and Ferriday. Erica has booked seven groups as a result of the tour. She also attended Travel Alliance Partner’s (TAP) regional meeting in Baton Rouge, La. She had the opportunity to network and promote new itinerary ideas to the 38 tour operators that make up TAP! She will be attending the American Bus Association Conference, Jan. 11-13, in Nashville, Tenn.

The staff of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, on behalf of the hospitality industry, would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to outgoing bureau board members. The organization is governed by 17 individuals appointed by organizations such as the chambers of commerce, city and parish governments and The Shreveport-Bossier Hotel and Lodging Association.

Board members are allowed to serve two consecutive (3-year) terms. Outgoing members include Chairman Betty Matthews, Ray Ferland, Luke Turner, Debra Hamilton and Jim Johnson.

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