The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau launched a redesigned and all-new Shreveport-Bossier.org, its main tourism website. The Tourist Bureau also plans to soon unveil its newly updated online arts and culture calendar, SBFunGuide.com.

The new site includes features such as multimedia-enhanced listings, TripAdvisor and Google Maps integration, a responsive design for mobile and tablet users, advanced meeting facility search, a built-in trip planner, responsive geo-triggers for nearby listings and events, integrated social feeds from Instagram and Facebook, and more. Shreveport-Bossier.org is the main tourism website, but it’s not the only site maintained by the Tourist Bureau as a source of visitor information. SBFunGuide.com, the arts and culture calendar that is a joint project of the Tourist Bureau and the Shreveport Regional Arts Council, is another popular online resource for discovering upcoming festivals, concerts and events. The “SBFunGuide” allows local event organizers and tourist attractions to submit their own events to be included on the website and in various publications and marketing efforts. The SBFunGuide was visited by 319,669 users in 2015 and new tourism partners learn how to use it every day. The SBFunGuide is also undergoing a huge update, and the new version of that site will launch soon with similar improvements.

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Follow the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Visitor Bureau’s new Instagram account @SeeShreveportBossier. Each month in 2016, the account will feature photos of Shreveport-Bossier by a different local photographer. The featured photographer in January was Jennifer Farnhill (@farnhill.foto) and February was John Linden (@JohnLindenPhotography).

Stacy Brown, president, and Sherry Stuckey, board chairwoman, attended Washington Mardi Gras, in Washington, D.C., Jan. 20-24, where they met and networked with state and federal officials.


Dianna Douglas, regional convention sales manager, attended the Professional Conference Management Association (PCMA)’s Convening Leaders in Vancouver, Feb. 7-9, in conjunction with partners from the Shreveport Convention Center and Hilton Hotel Shreveport. They had 13 appointments and received five requests for proposals.

Melissa Small, communications coordinator, hosted representatives from Women in Travel Summit for a site visit, Feb. 19-20. Shreveport-Bossier is one of the top four finalists competing to host the annual event in 2017.

Carolyn Dowden, bureau service manager, and Teresa Micheels, volunteer services coordinator, attended Event Service Professionals Association (ESPA)’s Annual Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, Jan. 7-11, where they participated in continuing education seminars.

Kevin Flowers, convention sales manager, won the bid to host the 366th Security Police Squadron K-9 Reunion in October 2016.

Erica Howard, tourism sales manager, attended Select Traveler Conference in Little Rock, Ark., Feb. 7-9, where she had 28 appointments.

Chris Jay, social media and public relations manager, partnered with Visit Webster Parish to host a post-conference media familiarization tour for members of the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) Freelance Council, Feb. 10-13. Participating journalists took part in a movie industry-themed tour of Minden and Shreveport-Bossier, overnighting in both cities. Jay also attended Food Media and Public Relations Conference in Atlanta, Ga., Feb. 19-20. Jay had eight one-on-one appointments and networked with food editors from top publications including Texas Monthly.

The Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission won the bid to host USA Boxing Junior Olympics and Southern Association Boxing Tournament, April 22-24.
Nominations Sought for 2016 P.R.I.D.E. Awards

The 2016 P.R.I.D.E. Awards, an annual awards presentation hosted by the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, will be held Thursday, May 5, at Sam’s Town Hotel & Casino in Shreveport. Reception will begin 6 p.m. with awards presentation following at 6:30 p.m. The evening will feature an awards program honoring the most outstanding individuals in Shreveport-Bossier’s hospitality and tourism industry. Nominations are currently being sought for more than 20 award categories, ranging from Outstanding Attraction Professional to Outstanding Culinary Professional. All hospitality industry businesses like hotels, restaurants and attractions can nominate individuals.

The evening’s final award, the P.R.I.D.E. Master Award, is the region’s highest honor among tourism professionals. The acronym P.R.I.D.E. stands for “Proud Residents Involved in Developing our Economy.” The awards are held each year during the first full week in May, in conjunction with National Travel and Tourism Week, which will be observed May 1-7.

“The P.R.I.D.E. Awards are an excellent opportunity to honor individuals who go above and beyond in their jobs every day,” said Stacy Brown, president of the Tourist Bureau. “The new lieutenant governor, Billy Nungesser, will also be in attendance to honor and thank the nominees for working to make Louisiana a great place to visit.”

There is no cost associated with nominating an individual for awards consideration. Employers or others interested in nominating an individual for a P.R.I.D.E. Award may do so by visiting www.Shreveport-Bossier.org/Pride. Nominations close at midnight on April 12. For more information, contact Charlie Rice, executive assistant, at crice@sbctb.org.

Sports Commission Hosts Wrestling State Tournament

The 2016 Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA) Wrestling State Tournament was held at the CenturyLink Center in Bossier City, Feb. 11-12. This was the first time the area has hosted the tournament since 2011, and the wrestling state tournament will return again in 2017. More than 80 schools across the state were represented with nearly 1,000 wrestlers competing across three divisions. More than 13,000 fans were in attendance over the two days.

“This is one of our strongest events,” said Kelly Wells, vice president of sports for the Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission. “This event couldn’t have happened without the help of volunteers and our hotel industry partners.”

More than 80 percent of the participants traveled from south Louisiana, stayed in hotels and ate in local restaurants.

“This was a fabulous event for Shreveport-Bossier to host because all the area hotel rooms were full,” said Debbie Coleman, sales manager at the Wyndham Garden Shreveport. “The wrestling tournament is important business for north Louisiana, and it had a great economic impact on the local area.”

Visitors’ Guide Celebrates Locals

The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau released the 2016 edition of the Official Visitors’ Guide to Shreveport-Bossier. The free, pocket-sized brochure is the primary fulfillment piece for visitor inquiries. A minimum of 100,000 guides are printed annually and distributed to visitors through hotels, brochure racks in hotels, restaurants and attractions in East Texas and Louisiana, and welcome centers across the state of Louisiana. The Visitors’ Guide is also available in electronic format on www.Shreveport-Bossier.org.

David Doe, co-manager of Herby K’s, was honored to be chosen to represent Shreveport-Bossier on the cover of the Visitors’ Guide.

Copies of the 2016 Official Visitors’ Guide to Shreveport-Bossier can be picked up at the Downtown Shreveport Visitor Center at 629 Spring St., requested by mail, by visiting www.Shreveport-Bossier.org or by calling 1-800-551-8682.
The Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission has been chosen for the second consecutive year as one of SportsEvents Magazine’s 2016 Readers’ Choice Award winners. Sports event professionals nominated destinations that they believe display exemplary creativity and professionalism toward the groups they host.

The Louisiana Office of Tourism awards grants to help fund marketing expenses associated with tourism events held throughout Louisiana through their Competitive Grant Program (CGP). The grant program is open to applicants who produce tourism events held July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. Applications must be postmarked by March 18. To download an application, visit www.crt.state.la.us/tourism/industry-partners/grants. For more information, contact Jay Tusa, director of communications and research at Louisiana Office of Tourism, at 225-342-8142 or jtusa@crt.la.gov.

Wyndham Garden Shreveport completed a multi-million dollar renovation and opened an exclusive club level and executive concierge’s lounge in February 2016. The hotel also hired Victoria Meyers to serve as the new general manager.

Sherry Stuckey, Chairwoman
Shreveport-Bossier Hotel & Lodging Association*

Carlton Golden, Vice Chairman
Bossier Parish Police Jury*

Tanita Baker, Treasurer
Shreveport-Bossier African American Chamber of Commerce*

Ray Tromba, Secretary
Bossier City Mayor’s Office*

Tari Bradford, Shreveport Mayor’s Office*

Shelli Briery, Hannah’s
Louisiana Downs*

Rob Brown, Shreveport-Bossier Hotel & Lodging Association*

Sandy Cimino, Bossier Chamber of Commerce*

Debbie Coleman, Shreveport-Bossier Hotel & Lodging Association*

Mary Dunn, Shreveport-Bossier Attractions Association*

Mark Garrett, Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce*

Joyce Jeffrey, Bossier Office of Community Services*

Jason McKinney, Louisiana Restaurant Association*

Kellie Morris, Caddo Parish Commission*

Luke Turner, Bossier Rural Mayors*

Patricia Wooldridge, Caddo Rural Municipalities*

*Appointing Organization