

# TravelTalk

September - October 2019 Newsletter

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## New Mardi Gras Survey Data Illustrates Impact of Carnival Season in Shreveport-Bossier



*Survey finds that the estimated economic impact of Mardi Gras parades was more than \$21 million in 2019, a 25% increase compared to 2016 survey data.*

Recently, the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau received the preliminary results of a new survey of Mardi Gras parade attendees conducted during the 2019 Carnival season in Shreveport-Bossier. The study, which was prepared by Wysong Brand Solutions, LLC, is based on data gathered during more than 600 interviews along the routes of five parades: Krewe of Sobek, Krewe of Harambee, Krewe of

Centaur, Krewe of Gemini, and Krewe of Highland.

The study found that the estimated combined total attendance of the five parades was 244,500, with 36% of those attendees visiting from outside of Caddo and Bossier Parishes. The estimated economic impact of these five parades on Shreveport-Bossier, including direct and indirect spending, was found to be more than \$21 million. This

figure represents a 25% increase over 2016 survey data, which estimated total spending at \$16 million.

The parades with the largest estimated attendance figures were the Krewe of Gemini, with 127,000, and the Krewe of Centaur, with 91,000. Inclement weather preceding and during the parades was thought to have negatively impacted Sobek, Centaur and Highland parades.

The parade with the highest percentage of out-of-town visitors was the Krewe of Centaur Parade, where 59% of individuals surveyed reported living outside of Caddo or Bossier Parishes. Overall, the percentage of parade attendees who reported living outside of Caddo or Bossier Parish grew by 7%. In 2016, 29% of parade attendees reported being visitors. In 2019, that overall percentage increased to 36%.

To learn more about Mardi Gras in Shreveport-Bossier, visit [www.ShreveportMardiGras.com](http://www.ShreveportMardiGras.com).

## Dates to Remember:

### Hospitality Breakfast

9/11 8 a.m.  
DiamondJacks  
Casino and Hotel

10/2 8 a.m.  
State Fair of Louisiana

### Hotel and Lodging Association Meeting

9/12 6 p.m.  
Silver Star Smokehouse -  
Housekeeping Staff  
Appreciation Dinner

10/10 12 p.m.  
Location TBA

For more Hotel and Lodging Association information, contact Joanna Folse-Alexander at [joannafolse@yahoo.com](mailto:joannafolse@yahoo.com).

## Get Social with Us!

f /LouisianasOtherSide

@sbctb

@seeshreveportbossier

/ShreveportBossier

Blog: [www.20x49.com](http://www.20x49.com)

Events: [www.SBFunGuide.com](http://www.SBFunGuide.com)

# SEE IT. BET IT. TASTE IT.

[www.Shreveport-Bossier.org](http://www.Shreveport-Bossier.org)



## >>> Your Bureau at Work

- Saturdays Through 11/30** Bossier City Farmers' Market  
*Pierre Bossier Mall*
- 9/1** Shreveport Pre-Labor Day Southern Soul and Blues Fest  
*Festival Plaza*
- 9/3** Be A Fan of Shreveport-Bossier Ambassador Tour: Hidden Gems  
*Various Locations*
- 9/7** KISS  
*CenturyLink Center*
- 9/7** Super Derby 40  
*Harrah's Louisiana Downs*
- 9/8** Sip, Unlimited  
*Margaritaville Resort Casino*
- 9/14** Highland Jazz and Blues Festival  
*Columbia Park*
- 9/21-10/31** The DixieMaze Fall Festival  
*DixieMaze Farms*
- 9/28-10/6** Red River Revel Arts Festival  
*Festival Plaza*
- 10/2-6** Prize Fest  
*Various Locations*
- 10/5** Miranda Lambert: Roadside Bars and Pink Guitars Tour  
*CenturyLink Center*
- 10/13** Alison Krauss  
*Shreveport Municipal Auditorium*
- 10/18** The Brewery Comedy Tour  
*Flying Heart Brewing and Pub*
- 10/19** Russian Ballet Theatre Presents Swan Lake  
*Shreveport Municipal Auditorium*
- 10/22** Pumpkin Shine On Line  
*Betty Virginia Park*
- 10/22-23** Paw Patrol Live! The Great Pirate Adventure  
*CenturyLink Center*
- 10/24-11/10** 113th Annual State Fair of Louisiana  
*Louisiana State Fairgrounds*
- 10/25** Spooktacular  
*The Strand Theatre*
- 10/26** ASEANA Fall Festival  
*Asian Gardens of Shreveport*
- 10/26** Jazz in The Park  
*Chris Hays Park & Recreation Center*

Submit your events to [www.SBFunGuide.com](http://www.SBFunGuide.com), an online community events calendar, for future promotions.



**Suzanne Card**

**Suzanne Card**, convention sales manager, **Jessica Rodgers**, convention sales manager, and **Tracy Young**, sales manager at Hilton Hotel Shreveport, went on sales calls in Baton Rouge, July 16-17. The group visited 20 associations to thank them for their business and to welcome them back to the Shreveport-Bossier area.



**Jessica Rodgers**

**Brandy Evans**, vice president of communications, graduated from the rigorous Certified Destination Management Executive (CDME) program, July 26, at Destinations International in St. Louis, Mo., July 22-25. She completed the program in a year and took courses that focused on destination advocacy, leadership, marketing, and other tourism-related programs.



**Brandy Evans**



**Stacy Brown**

**Stacy Brown**, president, also attended the conference. The convention offers attendees the opportunity to connect with tourism thought leaders and educational seminars.

**Card** booked the 2019 Bumper to Bumper Auto Parts Specialists' Equipment Fair to be held at the Shreveport Convention Center, Sept. 17-19. The event will attract approximately 100 attendees. The group is also considering Shreveport-Bossier for their 2022 company meeting which would draw approximately 500 attendees.

In addition, **Card** booked the Louisiana Society of Association Executives' 2020 annual convention to be held at the Shreveport Convention Center, Sept. 20-22. The event will attract approximately 60 Louisiana-based association meeting planners to Shreveport-Bossier.

**Kevin Flowers**, convention sales manager, conducted a site visit, July 19-20, with the reunion planner for the USS Bairoko Association. The group is



**Kevin Flowers**



**Charlotte Rice**

considering Shreveport-Bossier as the host destination for its military reunion in fall 2020.

**Charlotte Rice**, executive assistant to the president and Boom or Bust Byway coordinator, attended the International Association of Administrative Professionals Summit in National Harbor, Md., July 18-21. The annual event offers key tools, resources and professional development for executive assistants.

**Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau staff** attended the Lt. Governor's Travel Summit in Baton Rouge, Aug. 27-29. The annual convention featured a keynote address from the Lt. Governor, top educational speakers from around the country, workshops addressing



**Aly Velasquez**

the latest industry trends, opportunities to network with other tourism professionals, and more. **Stacy Brown**, **Brandy Evans**, and **Aly Velasquez**, marketing associate, attended a meeting with Brand USA to discuss international marketing cooperative opportunities. Evans also served as a thought leader in the Thought Leaders in Communications and PR Workshop. The Holiday Trail of Lights sponsored the Travel Counselors room and Velasquez addressed the group on behalf



**Chris Jay**

of the board. **Chris Jay**, public relations and social media manager, attended Travel Media Showcase in Atlanta, Ga., Aug. 20-23. He had appointments with more than 40 travel writers from outlets including *AAA Home & Away*, *Roads & Kingdoms*, *Fodor's*, and more. This travel media show typically results in an increased number of applicants to participate in upcoming media familiarization tours of Shreveport-Bossier.



## City of Shreveport and Shreveport Green Organize Citywide Cleanup Day

The City of Shreveport, in partnership with Shreveport Green, hosted a citywide cleanup on Aug. 24. This project supports Mayor Adrian Perkins' #loveshreveport campaign.

"If we love the city we call home, then we should keep it clean," said Mayor Perkins. "This cleanup day will be the first of many where we come together as a community to clean up our city."

Homeowners, businesses, schools, and organizations took part in the day to clean and beautify the area in which they live, work, and play. City departments also collected bulk items and collected trash.



*The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau and other organizations contributed to beautifying Shreveport on Aug. 24.*

"The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau is proud to support Mayor Perkins' Citywide cleanup initiative," said Stacy Brown, president of the Tourist Bureau. "Eradicating litter

and beautifying Shreveport-Bossier is an important part of making our destination appealing to visitors."

Approximately 850 volunteers from local organizations participated in the cleanup

including Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, Caddo Parish Public Schools, Shreveport Memorial Library, and more.

"We are thrilled that Mayor Perkins realizes the importance of a clean city and is taking the lead in making this a reality," said Donna Curtis, executive director of Shreveport Green. "Our citizens have always responded overwhelmingly to volunteer projects, and we are proud to be a part of this exciting effort."

To learn more about the Shreveport Citywide Cleanup, visit [www.shreveportgreen.org](http://www.shreveportgreen.org).

## Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau Announces New Convention Sales Manager



*Jessica Rodgers previously served as the sales manager for the Shreveport Convention Center.*

The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau is proud to announce that Jessica Rodgers has been hired as the convention sales manager. Rodgers will support the convention and tourism sales department in selling Shreveport-Bossier to convention, corporate, medical, and national regional association meeting planners.

"We are thrilled to have Jessica join our team. Her knowledge of the Shreveport Convention Center and local market gives her the ability to jump in and add even more value to the meeting and event planning industry," said David Bradley, vice president of sales and services for the Tourist Bureau.

Rodgers brings nine years of sales experience to her role. She previously worked as the sales manager for Shreveport Convention Center. There, she booked conventions, weddings, meetings, and other events such as Jurassic Quest, a dinosaur exhibition for children that drew approximately 10,000 attendees in 2018.

For more information about conventions and meetings, visit [www.shreveport-bossier.org/meetings](http://www.shreveport-bossier.org/meetings).

## Sports Biz Connect Expands to Sports BIZ Challenge



**REGISTER YOUR TEAM TODAY**  
[WWW.SPORTSBIZCHALLENGE.COM](http://WWW.SPORTSBIZCHALLENGE.COM)

*The annual sports industry networking event has expanded to include a series of sports competitions.*

The Shreveport-Bossier Sports BIZ Challenge will be held at Louisiana State University Shreveport on Oct. 17. The annual event serves as a networking opportunity for the sports tourism industry. This year, the event has expanded to include a series of sports competitions. Registered teams can participate in several sporting competitions such as basketball and disc golf.

"The Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission is proud to expand this event and partner with the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce,

Bossier Chamber of Commerce, Shreveport-Bossier African American Chamber of Commerce, and our sports organization partners," said Nicholas Kopka, logistics manager for the Sports Commission. "Our goal is to provide an opportunity for the local sports industry to network and to facilitate team building in a fun new way."

Registration for teams of five people is \$150 and is due by Sept. 26. To register a team and to learn more, visit [www.sportsbizchallenge.com](http://www.sportsbizchallenge.com).



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## Newsletter



### Industry Briefs:

Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser selected **Liz Swaine**, executive director of Downtown Development Authority, and **Jada Durden**, social media blogger of [www.LovingThisLifeJada.com](http://www.LovingThisLifeJada.com), to receive Bayou Krewe Ambassadors awards at the Lt. Governor's Tourism Summit, Aug. 29. Launched in 2017, the program identifies and empowers passionate people to become brand ambassadors.

The **Louisiana Office of Tourism's** Music Ambassadors program awards \$1,000 to bands that play at a qualifying event. To register, visit [www.louisianatravel.com/music/articles/louisiana-music-ambassadors](http://www.louisianatravel.com/music/articles/louisiana-music-ambassadors).

Sponsorship opportunities are now available for **Red River Mardi Gras Bash** during the Krewe of Centaur Parade, Feb. 15., hosted by the Tourist Bureau. The party, an American Bus Association Top 100 Event, is an exclusive party for out-of-town groups from throughout the southern region to enjoy one of the largest Mardi Gras parades in Louisiana. There are several sponsorship opportunities for local attractions to get involved in the event from entertainment and tent banner to t-shirt and golf cart sponsorship. For more information, contact Erica Telsee, tourism sales manager for the Tourist Bureau, at [etelsee@sbctb.org](mailto:etelsee@sbctb.org) or call 1-800-551-8682 ext.104.

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