

PUBLIC RELATIONS

February 2010

Prepared by:
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MEDIA VISITS, TRADE SHOWS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Visit Florida Chicago Media Mission – February 21-26

VSPC's Senior Public Relations Manager took the windy city by storm when she joined forces with the State's tourism agency for a week-long media mission in one of our top feeder markets. While in Chicago, Mary Haban visited with top editors from *Orbitz*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Parent Magazine*, *The Chicago Sun Times*, *WLS-TV (ABC Chicago)*, *The Nate Berkus Show*, *TravelingMom.com*, and numerous other freelance travel writers. She is currently following up with many of the leads and writers and working on bringing many of them in for personal visits to the destination.

MEDIA ASSISTANCE PROVIDED:

January & February 2010 Media Assistance:

January 4 - Provided fact checking to a writer from *Go Magazine*, the in-flight magazine for AirTran Airways, on the Central Avenue antiques district.

January 4 - Assisted Patricia Letakis, Senior Editor/TASTES Editor, of *Florida Travel + Life Magazine* with information on area restaurants/new openings.

January 5 – Provided details on KaYoga to *News of the World* in the UK for a story feature.

January 5 - Fielded a phone call from freelance writer Andy Schrader who called to say he's been hired on as a full time freelancer for *Southern Living Magazine*.

January 6 - Provided assistance to Andrea Tamboer, editor of the *Grand Rapids Press* in Michigan, with lodging and story ideas for an upcoming visit in March.

January 6 – Provided editorial assistance to Andrew Bill of the *New York Times* for the Florida Travel section he is currently compiling.

January 7 – Assisted Mary Lou Jansen of **VisitSouth.com** with information on Romantic Inns for a story she is writing.

January 7 – Responded to an inquiry from Linda Fasteson, a freelance travel writer, regarding story angles and attractions information for an upcoming visit to the area to write a story.

January 7 – Assisted Ann Cipperly with photos for a travel article on Clearwater, St. Pete and Tampa for *East Alabama Living magazine*.

January 8 - Fielded a call from Stephen Foutaine, the editor of *Canadian Traveller Magazine* out of Canada, regarding his visit for Florida Huddle and upcoming story ideas for his magazine.

January 8 – Provided Susan Friedman of *Florida Travel + Life Magazine* with information on activities to do during the Summer in our area.

January 11 – Assisted Traci Suppa of *Travelforkids.com* with info on kid friendly activities.

January 11 – Phone call from Tom Mapes of the PGA Merchandise Show regarding our participating in this year's event in Orlando.

January 12 – Provided photo assistance to Eleanor Baker with *AAA Merrimack Valley/AAA Valley News*. She visited the area last fall and stayed at TradeWinds Islands Resort.

January 13 - Responded to a phone call from Andrew Billings of the *New York Times* Florida Section, regarding providing him with editorial information for his travel section.

January 14 – Assisted Ginger Warder, a freelance travel writer, with information (maps, visitor guide, press releases, info on what's new) to write a pet-friendly travel guide to Florida for Countryman Press. She is also working on an iPhone app for St. Petersburg which should go up on iTunes in late Feb or early March.

January 19 – Received an inquiry from Brad Wiegmann, an outdoor writer from Arkansas interested in visiting the Tarpon area to fish. He generally freelances, but has a web site (BradWiegmann.com) and a column that appears in a few papers in Oklahoma.

January 19 – Provided editorial to Kathryn Folliott for use in *Travelweek.Magazine* (Canada.)

January 19 – Assisted Adele Woodyard, who writes the blog; www.vacationfunflorida.com; with information on package deals, weddings, and such.

January 20 – Fielded an inquiry from Carolyn Blundell, formerly with *Life & Fashion Magazine* in Canada and now working with *Preferred Magazine* - <http://www.mypreferredlifestyle.com/>. She wrote to update her contact information and be placed on our media list.

January 26 - Received a call from Melissa Eichmann at *Bay News 9*, concerning Al Lang Field and the things coming in to St. Pete. She requested an interview with Kevin Smith and the Sports Commission.

January 26 – Worked with Chris Chris Kinasz of *Travelweek Magazine*, providing him information for a Family Travel piece he was writing for the Spotlight section of the magazine.

January 27 – Helped facilitate an interview between DT Minich and the *Tampa Bay Business Journal* regarding the economic impact of Florida Huddle.

January 27 - Assisted Lisa Cheng of Travel + Leisure Magazine regarding a new book they are publishing called *Unexpected America* and will feature St. Petersburg.

January 27 – Provided information on the Chihuly Gallery to Abel Delgado, Managing Editor, Worth Custom Publishing, for a travel piece he is writing for *Undiscovered Florida*, a publication that covers the state’s lesser-known charms in terms of nature and culture.

January 27 – Provided Lisa Cheng of *Travel + Leisure Magazine* with editorial information on a list of unique things to do in our area with the bohemian vibe for her upcoming story.

January 29 – Inquiry from Kathryn Folliott of *Travelweek Magazine* (Canada) regarding a new angle for a story – this one about Clearwater Beach and family vacations – to appear in the Spotlight section of the magazine.

January 29 – Provided editorial assistance on meetings to Lisa Simundson * Florida Editor * *Meetings South Magazine* for a couple of annual stories -- one, their Central West Florida update in March; then the April all-Florida update, which will include articles on performing arts centers as offsite group venues; cool teambuilding ideas; small towns that make great day trips for groups; and also -- Medical Meetings. Worked with meetings team to answer this lead.

February 1 – Assisted Sam Polcer, the editor of *MyMidwest Magazine*, the in-flight for Midwest Airlines with information on the destination for a piece called “Itinerary.” For his next issue, he wanted to focus on an all-baseball Itinerary: how best to enjoy Spring Training and all things baseball in Western Florida.

February 2 – Provided Rachel Carr, Associate Editor/Destinations with info on meeting facilities to be featured in a destination feature story in the May 2010 issue of *Association News*.

February 2 – Provided destination information to Kevin Jack, Host of *610 CKTB Radio* in Canada for an upcoming trip to the area.

February 3 – Assisted Nancy McGoff, *The New York Times* Marketing Promotion Coordinator with editorial content on the destination for an upcoming advertorial.

February 4 – Assisted Mike Baginski of *Canadian Travel Press* (Baxter Publishing) with details on the contest running in his publication.

February 7 – Assisted Cathy Stapells of the *Toronto Sun* with information on the destination for her story on March Break in Florida.

February 8 – Provided details on pet friendly beaches to Duke Christoffersen, a freelance travel trade writer based in California.

February 9 – Request for radio interview from Roy Lowey of *Talking Travel*, on WTMY 1280 based in Canada.

February 9 – Provided photo assistance to Dany Van Cauwenbergh, a journalist with *'Travel Magazine'* out of Belgium, who attended the Florida Huddle show.

February 9 – Received email from Traci Suppa of *New York's Hudson Valley* saying she has to cancel her trip to the area.

February 10 - Call from Kelly McKeown of *Discovery Channel Canada* regarding potential story ideas for their upcoming shows.

February 10 – Assisted Chad Kennedy, Publisher & Editor-in-Chief of *Teen Scene Magazine* with information on the areas' attractions and accommodations for a potential visit during the month of March.

February 10 – Assisted Steve Huettel of the *St. Petersburg Times* with an interview regarding tourism outlook and winter visitor numbers.

February 11 – Provided an on camera interview to Melvin Beal, a reporter with *10 Connects News* (CBS Tampa Bay) on VSPC's advertising campaign in the cold markets.

February 11 – Provided radio interview to Valerie Ingram, a reporter with *970 WFLA-AM* on tourism numbers and how we are stacking up against other destinations in this economy.

February 11 – Provided editorial copy to Cindy Sosroutomo, a writer with *Travelweek* (Canada) to be featured in the Spotlight focusing on luxury travel.

February 11 – Provided interview to Ted Jackovics of the *Tampa Tribune* regarding VSPC's marketing/advertising campaign in NYC and Chicago markets.

February 16 - Assisted Katie Sanders from the *St. Petersburg Times* regarding a story she is writing on the unseasonably cold weather and how it's affecting tourism.

February 16 - Assisted Paola Singer, a researcher from *Travel + Leisure Magazine*, regarding a story they are running in an upcoming issue.

February 16 – Spoke with Karen Farrell of *Snowbirds Gulf Coast Magazine* about spring training in the area.

February 16 – Contacted Terry Conway of the *Delaware County Times* for details on his visit to the area, dates, what kind of coverage the host will receive.

February 17 – Interview request from Jonathan Petramala with *Bay News 9*. He’s wondering if we have any idea on how the numbers will be for the Spring Training crowd.

February 17 – Answered a wide variety of questions for Paola Singer, a researcher/fact checker for *Travel + Leisure Magazine* for an upcoming article featuring the area.

February 18 – Responded to an inquiry from Andrea Sachs of the *Washington Post*. She asked me to fact check an article she was writing about the area.

February 18 - Call from Chris Robinson from the *Chris Robinson Travel Show* (Canada) regarding partnering again with his radio show to promote the area to the Canadian market.

February 23 – Assisted Casey Wohl, author of *Girls Getaway Guide* (and who appears regularly on the syndicated show Daytime), with information on Girl Getaways in the St. Petersburg/Clearwater area.

ASSISTING VISIT FLORIDA:

During the month of February the Public Relations Team provided editorial assistance to Visit Florida Offices in Canada, South America, and the domestic office located in Tallahassee. The Public Relations team was also actively involved in several partnerships, including public relations and media relations initiatives, to lure top notch media to the area. We received and respond to, on a regular basis, Quick Lead’s and writer inquiries to promote both the destination and the State of Florida as a whole.

January 12 – Assisted VISIT FLORIDA’s Latin American Office with a lead from *Swishy Travelista*, a Mexican travel trade newsletter that will be doing a Florida Beaches feature in the February issue to be distributed to their 10,000 trade database.

January 12 – Responded to a VISIT FLORIDA Quick Lead for a travel sidebar to accompany a story on Florida. Worked with Chris Moss, Travel Editor for U.K.-based *Time Out* (www.timeout.com), who was seeking info relating to “Florida for Culture Vultures.”

January 26 – Helped facilitate a lead from VISIT FLORIDA’s Germany office seeking info on arts in Florida. Send info about museums, festivals, openings, exhibits, etc. to our German PR office to liaise with them on this.

February 12 – Worked with VISIT FLORIDA’s Latin American office to feature Tarpon Springs El Sentinel, the Spanish version of the *Sun Sentinel* (in South Florida). Worked with Yvonne Valdez, Copy Editor/Writer.

February 15 – Worked with VISIT FLORIDA’s Canadian office to provide travel writer Alison Wood with contact information for Condos by Sirata.

ASSISTING THE INDUSTRY & THE CVB & OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

January 7 – Assisted Cindy Cockburn of CC Communications with the names of several German magazines and newspapers who have written about the Dali Museum in the past year.

January 11 – Provided assistance to VSPC’s Film Commission regarding the Berlin Filmfest.

January 12 – Call from Chris at Islands End Resort regarding a 10% discount on a certain unit during the upcoming month. I directed her to our industry partner site to upload the info.

January 13 – Provided fact-checking assistance to Kelly Prieto of Hayworth Creative on the Tradewinds Islands Resort press kit.

January 15 – Fielded email from Susan Robertson of the St. Pete Pier who provided feedback regarding the navigation on our new website.

January 18 – Responded to an email from Joe D’Aluisio of the American Lifestyle Network; www.myamericanlifestyle.net; regarding an upcoming visit to the area.

January 19 – Call from Jill Manthey of the Yacht Starship regarding the ships service in the Clearwater area and updates on services they provide.

January 29 – Call from Anita Treiser of the Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce regarding confirming our meeting to discuss media missions and press groups.

January 29 – Returned call from Donna Rodriguez of B.R. Guest Restaurants regarding information on the area and things to do so she could craft key messages and quotes for her CEO.

February 1 – Attended ribbon cutting for the brand new Hyatt Regency Clearwater Beach Resort & Spa.

February 1 – Contact Jillian Baczewski of Cheryl Andrews PR requesting photos of the new Hyatt Regency Clearwater Beach Resort & Spa.

February 1 – Fielded call from Frank Dame of Clearwater Marine Aquarium regarding visitor/hotel numbers; and liaise with Walter Klages for details.

February 3 – Attended a meeting of the Florida Aviation Historical Society.

February 3 – Inquiry from Cheryl Anne Finnerty of TRS about the photographer who attended Florida Huddle and provided her with that information.

February 8 – Attended SocialFresh – a one day conference for social media marketers.

February 9 – Directed Donna Rodriguez of B.R. Guest Restaurants to the Pinellascvb.com site to pull tourism stats for fourth quarter 2009.

February 9 – Provided Amanda Russo of the Zimmerman Agency with information on Beach Walk for the press materials they are compiling for the Sandpearl Resort.

February 9 – David Downing was the keynote speaker at the Dunedin Rotary.

February 11 – Lunch meeting and property tour of the Residence Inn Marriott on Treasure Island.

February 11 – Attended the Tampa Bay Ad Fed's Addy Awards Ceremony in Tampa.

February 15 – Call from the Zimmerman PR Agency regarding the ribbon cutting ceremony at the Gallery at Sandpearl.

February 16 – Attended media day luncheon and press conference for the Transitions Championship at Innisbrook Resort & Golf Club.

February 18 – Attended a lunch meeting with Tampa Bay & Co's new Leisure Sales Director.

February 18 – Attended ribbon cutting for Gallery at Sandpearl Resort.

February 18 – Responded to Cindy Cockburn of CC Communications on our social media outreach and initiatives.

February 23 – Trip to Orlando for site inspection for POW WOW trade show.

February 25 – Contacted Dee Norberg's at the Island's End Resort regarding a writer who requested to stay at the property (Terry Conway, *Delaware County Times*.)

February 26 – Reached out to Susan Robertson at the St. Pete Pier to let her know we were promoting the Zombie St. Pete event on our Facebook pages.

February 27 – Attended a Women on Course professional networking/golf event.

February 27 – Took a guided tour of Philippe Park.

SOCIAL MEDIA INITIATIVES:

Throughout the month of January, the VSPC Public Relations Team continued to monitor and post updates on Facebook, Twitter, PressSuite and YouTube pages to promote the destination to our ever-growing fan base. We are also monitoring news coverage on a daily basis, and forwarding positive coverage to our industry partners via email. In addition, we continued to conduct extensive conversations with Cision, our clip monitoring service, regarding renewing their contract.

We posted the following press releases on Facebook, PinellasCVB.com, Press Briefs, and FloridasBeachMedia.com: “**Winter Campaign Delivers Sunshine to Snowbound,**” “**VSPC Spreads Sunshine at NY Times Travel Show,**” “**College Baseball Returns to St. Pete/Clearwater.**”

In addition, we continue to train on the new SimpleView system, updating partner and media information, as well as designing a variety of headers. We also continue working on creating Exact Target templates for press releases and e-news.

PRESS RELEASES & E-NEWS & INDUSTRY ALERTS:

February 10 – TDC Meeting Re-cap send to media and the industry.

February 11 – Press Release entitled, “**Winter Campaign Delivers Sunshine to Snowbound; Taxi cabs, subways, delivery trucks, elevators carry message to key markets,**” sent to media and the industry.

February 24 – Press Release entitled, “**VSPC Spreads Sunshine at NY Times Travel Show Hourly vacation giveaways set St. Pete/Clearwater apart at largest show in U.S.,**” sent to media and the industry.

February 25 – Press Release entitled, “**College Baseball Returns to St. Pete/Clearwater Key Big Ten/BIG EAST tourney matchups to be streamed live online,**” sent to media and the industry.

UK PR Firm and German Media Activities:

Please refer to separate reports from each office.

Outdoor/Nature PR Activities: February 2010

Bill AuCoin & Associates, Inc.

- Bassmaster magazine, the premier bass angling magazine with 535,000 subscribers, has a full page feature article in the March 2010 issue about the great bass fishing in our Lake Tarpon. Visitors are advised to check out Crystal Beach, Caladesi Island State Park, and attractions in downtown Tarpon Springs. Called "Mining the Jewel of Pinellas County," the article salutes Lake Tarpon Resort for its amenities and its convenience to Anderson Park. It is a result of a December fishing-trip visit by the editor, James Hall, and the writer, David Hunter Jones.

- Outdoor writer Brad Wiegmann of Arkansas flew in to visit his sister who lives in Tarpon Springs and he made it a working vacation, gathering information and pictures for articles for several websites and two Oklahoma newspapers, Stilwell Democrat-Journal and Westville Register. Bill AuCoin, outdoors/nature PR resource, set up a kayak flats fishing expedition for Brad, who arranged others on his own. Wiegmann has posted four angling features online with links to local guides and to visitspeteclearwater.com.
- Helped fact-check nature/outdoors issues for an article planned for in Travel and Leisure magazine that calls attention to the appeals of Weedon Island and Shell Key preserves, inshore sportfishing, and kayaking
- Set up March 16 and 17 fishing expeditions for Eric Sharp, outdoors editor, Detroit Free Press. Sharp will fish for large redfish and speckled trout in St. Joseph Sound and for trophy bass on Lake Tarpon
- Provided fishing and restaurant information to radio personality Lloyd Daugherty, host of "Dixie Angler Radio Network," a weekly radio program airing on more than 35 radio stations in the Southeast. Daugherty is contemplating a mid-March visit.

UPCOMING MEDIA VISITS - TRADE SHOWS - PRESS GROUPS:

- 1 – ITB Berlin – March 10-15
- 2 – Eric Sharp, Outdoors Editor, Detroit Free Press – March 15-17
- 3 – Jeff Book, Coastal Living Magazine – March 17-19
- 4 – New York City NBC/LX Shows/Interview Series – March 20-23
- 4 – Andrea Tamboer, Grand Rapids City Press – March 24-31
- 5 – Jacquie Kubin, Editor, Communities at Washington Times – March 24-28
- 6 – Grand Prix UK Press Group – March 24-29