

PUBLIC RELATIONS

March 2010

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MEDIA VISITS, TRADE SHOWS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

ITB Berlin – March 10-15

Assistant Director David Downing traveled to Berlin to participate in the International Tourism Bourse (ITB), which is the world's largest trade show. Over the week-long event, he met with travel trade publications from around the globe, liaised with our European-based PR firm, Fleishman-Hillard and represented the destination at myriad industry events and media receptions. He also met with European representatives from around the state to discuss possible networking and co-branded PR and marketing opportunities. ITB, which is held every year in Berlin, draws more than 80,000 people every year.

Eric Sharp, Outdoors Editor, Detroit Free Press – March 15-17

The Detroit Free Press is a general-interest daily newspaper. It has a morning circulation of more than 269,000 and a Sunday circulation of more than 560,000. The premier newspaper in the Detroit market, their weekday full-run newspapers reach three times as many adults as the *Oakland Press*, *Macomb Daily* and *Daily Tribune* combined. Most importantly, the Detroit market is a key feeder market for Visit St. Pete/Clearwater. Mr. Sharp, the outdoors editor for this high circulation daily, is a regular visitor to our area and has written several articles about our spectacular fishing. A special thanks to the Hilton St. Petersburg Carillon Park for providing him with complimentary accommodations.

Jeff Book, Coastal Living Magazine – March 17-19

Post Card Inn on the Beach and the Orchid so graciously hosted this top travel writer, who was in the area to write a feature article on beach communities, specifically, Pass-a-Grille. While here, Mr. Book dined at the Don CeSar Beach Resort, experienced the KaYoga excursion, visited Shell Key Preserve and Fort De Soto Park, and immersed himself in the quaint community of Pass-a-Grille and all it had to offer. Article will be published this summer.

New York City NBC/LX Shows/Interview Series – March 20-23

Assistant CVB Director David Downing traveled to NYC to meet with media representatives for an appearance on LX NY, which is an afternoon lifestyle and interview show that airs on NBC 4 in the greater NYC market. While there, he also did a walk-thru of VSPC's massive Station Domination campaign and met with representatives from various other media outlets and pitched stories.

Andrea Tamboer, Grand Rapids City Press – March 24-31

Visit St. Pete/Clearwater teamed up with the Hyatt Regency Clearwater Beach Resort & Spa to host this talented travel editor for The Grand Rapids Press in Michigan. She was in the area to write a feature on family travel. This publication has a readership of about 1.3 million.

Jacque Kubin, Editor, Communities at Washington Times – March 24-28

The Communities are a branded part of The Washington Times and are featured on the front cover (www.washingtontimes.com) where headlines change daily. The times runs both print and online house ads for the communities and they are establishing a contributing relationship with America's Morning News (25 markets morning drive.) This travel writer was on assignment to write a travel destination piece with the angle of getting of the main land and exploring all that St. Petersburg has to offer. A special thank you goes out to Innisbrook Resort & Golf Club who played host to this top travel editor and her family during their stay in the destination. The article is forthcoming.

Grand Prix UK Press Group – March 24-29

Three top-notch travel writers, one from the online sector (I Village.com), one from the newspaper sector (The Daily Mirror), and one from the magazine sector (Sky Sports), participated in a five day immersion tour of the St. Petersburg/ Clearwater area during Grand Prix week. While here, the group saw the best the area had to offer, including visits to Caladesi Island State Park, the Salvador Dali Museum, The Clearwater Marine Aquarium, a tour of the new Hyatt Regency Clearwater Beach Resort & Spa, and accommodations at the Post Card Inn on the Beach and the Sandpearl Resort. Combined circulation for all pubs is more than 10 million.

MEDIA ASSISTANCE PROVIDED:

March 2010 Media Assistance:

March 1 – Provide Jacque Kubin of the *Communities at the Washington Times* with specifics for her upcoming visit to the area.

March 2 – Fielded call from Kelly Hediger of *Smithsonian Magazine* who was going to be in the area and was seeking information on advertising opportunities. Forwarded call to Debbie Meihls for follow up.

March 2 – Assist travel writer Terry Conway of the *Delaware County Times* with preliminary details for his upcoming visit.

March 2 – Assisted Jackie Walling of *2011 Destination Hyatt Guide* with editorial content on the destination.

March 2 – Provided April Taylor, who works in the Marketing department for Springhill Suites in Clearwater with images to add/use for their hotel website.

March 3 – Responded to call from Jeff Book of *Coastal Living Magazine* regarding his upcoming visit to our area to write an article on beach communities.

March 3 – Fielded a call from Leo Jakobson of *Successful Meetings and Incentive Magazines* for an interview about how our 2009 meetings business panned out; and the forecast for 2010 on the meetings front.

March 4 – Responded to email from Dennis Richardson of the South Florida Sun Sentinel requesting compilation of noteworthy area festivals

March 4 – Call from Jeff Book of *Coastal Living Magazine* regarding his visit to the area to highlight Pass-a-Grille and beach communities. Provided him with information on the area and on accommodations.

March 5 – Fielded a call from Lloyd Sowers of *FOX 13 News* regarding Spring Break stats.

March 5 – Provided an on-camera interview to Melissa Eichman of *Bay News 9* regarding the passing of the Travel Promotion Act and what it means for travelers.

March 5 – Provided information on who to contact at Tampa Bay & Company to Noah Pransky of *10 Connects News* regarding the bid for the 2014 Super Bowl.

March 5 – Provided Lloyd Sowers of *FOX 13 News* with information on commercial lodging visitors to the area for a story he was working on.

March 8 – Provided interview to Steve Huettel of the *St. Petersburg Times* regarding the bed tax monies and the request by both the baseball folks and the Dali for funding from it.

March 8 – Fielded an email from Chris D’Emilio of *WSB-FM & Cox Radio in Atlanta* who was searching for information on advertising. Referred him to Debbie Meihls in the Ad Division.

March 9 – Respond to inquiry from Jennifer Clay with *American Style and NICHE Magazines* for information about upcoming cultural events in St. Pete.

March 9 – Assisted Jeff Book of *Coastal Living Magazine* with details for his visit.

March 9 – Assisted Diana Rowe, Contributing Editor for *Corporate & Incentive Travel (C&IT)*; with information on the destination and venues that are new.

March 9 – Call from Lauren Callahan of *News Day* out of NYC regarding setting up a meeting with DT and the advertising director.

March 10 – Responded to an inquiry from Jeff Book of *Coastal Living Magazine* regarding final details for his upcoming visit to the area.

March 11 – Talked with travel writer Terry Conway of the *Delaware County Times* and provided him with a list of things to see and do during his upcoming visit to the area.

March 12 – Call from Mary Lou Jansen of *Visit South.com*; provided her with photos of the Highland Games in Dunedin.

March 14 – Provided destination information to Chelle Walton, a freelance writer, who was working on a travel piece for *The Miami Herald*.

March 15 – Media inquiry from David Cowx, editor and publisher of *Tee to Green Golf Magazine Canada*.

March 16 – Provided information on family travel for *New York Times* writer, Andrew Bill.

March 19 – Provided freelance travel writer, Julie Hatfield, who stayed at the Innisbrook Resort & Golf Club, with beach and birding photos and area/destination photos for her article.

March 19 – Responded to an email inquiry from Rochelle “Rori” Paul Freelance Writer - Social Media Marketing Specialist.

March 22 – Fielded call from *FOX 13 News* Reporter, Steve Nichols, regarding lacrosse teams training in our area and liaised with sports division to arrange interview.

March 24 – Call from Chris Robinson of the *Chris Robinson Travel Show* (Radio) out of Canada regarding a possible segment on an upcoming show.

March 24 – Provided images to Paola Singer of *Travel + Leisure Magazine* for an upcoming article on the St. Pete/Clearwater area.

March 24 – Media inquiry from Harvey Chipkin, a freelance writer of *POW WOW Daily* and a request for an interview.

March 25 – Editorial assistance provided to Sarah Latta of *Coastal Living Magazine* regarding questions pertaining to Fort De Soto Park’s Paws Playground, also provided links and photos.

March 29 – Call from Steve Cohen of the *Broadstreet Review* out of Philadelphia regarding destination information for a story he is writing on Spring Training.

March 30 – Provided destination information for Sarah Latta of *Coastal Living Magazine*.

March 30 – Reviewed advertorial on family travel for Andrew Bill’s of the *New York Times*.

ASSISTING VISIT FLORIDA:

During the month of March 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.

March 2 – Fact checked an article on our area for Lauren Tjaden of VISIT FLORIDA.

March 22 – Liaised with the VISIT FLORIDA Canada office to assist travel editor Nadine Silverthorne of Sweet Mama Publications.

March 23 – Teamed up with VISIT FLORIDA to assist Sarah Latta, a writer from *Coastal Living Magazine*, with some information regarding Fort De Soto Paw Playground.

March 29 – Call from Nate Long of VISIT FLOIRDA regarding helping a journalist with a Spring Training story. Reporter's name is Steve Cohen.

March 29 – Media inquiry from Nate Long of VISIT FLORIDA to assist Lena Katz of *Ortiz.com*.

ASSISTING THE INDUSTRY & THE CVB & OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

March 2 – Worked with Sarah Mason of the Sports Commission on a quote to include in the press release being prepared for the 2010 Gulf Coast Stand Up Paddleboard Championships.

March 2 – Attended a Public Relations Society of America Event to mentor potential candidates so they may earn their National accreditation.

March 9 – Worked with VSPC's Meetings & Convention department to provide the name of a meeting planner to Diane Rowe, Contributing Editor for *Corporate & Incentive Travel (C&IT)*.

March 9 – Responded to an email from Suzanne King of *SIK Productions (John's Pass Village)* and let her know we'd promote the Florida Winery at John's Pass Walks Away from Florida State Wine Competition with 7 Medals.

March 11 – Call from Dee Norbergs of the Island's End Resort asking for a call back regarding a question she had.

March 12 – Assisted Joe Fernandez of the Pinellas County Solid Waste Division who called looking for information on an upcoming conference at the Tradewinds Island Resorts; forwarded this inquiry to the CVB's Convention Services Division.

March 12 – Provided Robert Danielson of the City of St. Pete with the name of our Public Relations contact at the Don CeSar Beach Resort, a Loews Hotel.

March 19 – Spoke with Lori Rosso of the Seabreeze Manor in Gulfport about meeting with the UK Press Group to chat about the Gulfport community.

March 19 – Call from Paul Warren of Meetings Afloat regarding details for the Grand Prix Press Group from the UK.

March 22 – Contacted Kathy White at the Salvador Dali Museum; Cindy Cockburn of CC Communications, and Peg Wesselink of Peg’s Cantina to finalize itinerary for Grand Prix UK Press Group.

March 24 – Call from Pete Krulder of Caladesi Island State Park regarding details for a press group visit there.

March 31 – Attended a Public Relations Society of America Mixer/Reception to honor recently accredited members, including Mary Haban, APR.

SOCIAL MEDIA INITIATIVES:

Throughout the month, 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.

We posted the following press releases on Facebook, PinellasCVB.com, Press Briefs, and FloridasBeachMedia.com: **“World Series Rematch Comes to Clearwater This Week,”** **“PGA TOUR Set to Tee off in St. Pete/Clearwater,”** and **“ABC, Grand Prix Speed into St. Pete this Weekend.”**

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

PRESS RELEASES & E-NEWS & INDUSTRY ALERTS:

March 2 – Press release entitled, **“World Series Rematch Comes to Clearwater This Week... Phillies-Yankees game at Bright House Field kick-starts Grapefruit League action,”** sent to media and the industry.

March 3 - TDC Meeting Re-cap send to media and the industry.

March 17 – Press release entitled, **“PGA TOUR Set to Tee off in St. Pete/Clearwater: NBC to broadcast coverage of 2010 Transitions Championship from Innisbrook Resort,”** send to media and the industry.

March 19 – E-News sent to the industry and media.

March 25 – Press release entitled, “**ABC, Grand Prix Speed into St. Pete this Weekend...** *National TV coverage puts St. Pete/Clearwater on sport’s center stage,*” 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: March 2010

Bill AuCoin & Associates, Inc.

- Accompanied Eric Sharp, outdoors editor of the Detroit Free Press, on two sport fishing expeditions. Sharp plans to post a video feature on his newspaper blog about the big-bass potential of Lake Tarpon and about the superior saltwater fishing in St. Joseph Sound.
- Escorted Coastal Living Magazine's Jeff Book around Fort De Soto Park for a planned feature on barrier islands.
- Attended a monthly meeting and contributed publicity ideas to members of the Dunedin Marketing Committee.
- Updated information and provided images to freelance Pam Selbert who for a St. Louis Post-Dispatch feature about kayaking "to see a different side of Florida." Her article is expected to run in a June issue to coincide with the opening of Harry Potter exhibit at Universal Studios.
- Researched and provided nature/outdoor items to the PR department for possible use on the tourism bureau's Facebook and Twitter pages.
- Provided beach and bird photos to travel writer Julie Hatfield, she was a recent guest at Innisbrook Resort & Golf Club.

UPCOMING MEDIA VISITS - TRADE SHOWS - PRESS GROUPS:

- 1 – Andrew Collins Visit, *About.com* – April 20-22
- 2 – Visit Florida New York City Media Receptions – April 26-28
- 3 – Visit Florida Toronto Media Luncheon & Tour – April 25-30
- 4 – Terry Conway Visit – *Delaware County Times* – April 29-May 3