

PUBLIC RELATIONS

May 2010

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

International Network of Golf Media Event & Conference - Pinehurst, NC – May 8-12

Senior PR Manager Mary Haban was one of the featured speakers at a luncheon VSPC hosted for the International Network of Golfer's Annual Conference in Pinehurst, North Carolina. Haban was invited to speak in conjunction with Innisbrook Resort Golf Club, to showcase the St. Pete/Clearwater area to conference attendees who were comprised of top golf media from across the country. Since the ING Conference will be held at Innisbrook in 2011, this was the perfect opportunity to drum up excitement about the area, while making magnificent connections with key golf writers. The conference also provided the unique opportunity to participate in a four and a half hour media marketplace, which included one-on-one appointments with top editors and allowed the chance for Haban to be interviewed by a variety of television and radio outlets.

National Tourism Week Luncheon & Rally – May 7 & May 11

Following the National Tourism Week luncheon at the TradeWinds Resort, the PR team was on hand for the Tourism Rally at Tampa Airport, which partnered VSPC with local tourism partners, including Tampa Bay and Company and Busch Gardens, to celebrate the value of tourism to the entire area. The PR team arranged and conducted a number of interviews with local media in support of the event, which resulted in broad coverage for the industry and the destination.

NATJA Conference (North American Travel Journalists Assn.) - Reno, NV – May 12-15

As an active member of this illustrious group of travel professionals, VSPC's Senior PR Manager Mary Haban traveled to Reno to network with talented travel writers from some of the nation's best media outlets. The event included a fantastic ½ day media marketing event, in addition to a vast array of opportunities to speak with the media one-on-one.

International POW WOW – Orlando, Florida - May 15-20

Deputy Director David Downing traveled to Orlando for International Pow Wow, the largest annual international trade show in the country. While there, in addition to meeting with tour operators and industry reps, Downing conducted interviews with media from around the globe---including Chinese television, German and Dutch radio, UK trade publications and more---to get the word out internationally that the beaches in our area were unaffected by the (then month-old) oil spill. Downing was also part of a delegation from VSPC and other Gulf Coast destinations that met with executives from the Alaska Tourism Board, who shared lessons they learned from the Exxon Valdez spill and how that experience might help us address our oil spill moving forward.

Ciara Corcoran, Irish tour operator with American Holidays – May 20-21

VSPC's Public Relations Team worked with our UK Leisure Sales office to host Ms. Ciara Corcoran and her son, providing attraction assistance while they were in town. The dynamic duo enjoyed a complimentary ride on Dolphin Encounter (Thursday) and took the Caladesi Connection (Friday) to explore one of America's best beaches.

Stephen Fontaine, Associate Publisher - Canadian Traveller – May 20-22

Following the Pow Wow trade show in Orlando, this top travel editor from one of the most widely circulated publications in Canada, came to our area to write a feature story. Special thanks to the folks at the Renaissance Vinoy Resort & Golf Club for hosting him.

Tom Dedek of Tom on Tour – German Journalist – May 21-25

Tom Dedek, one of the most high-profile GLBT journalists in Germany, visited the area after Pow Wow in Orlando to get a first-hand update of the area's newest developments, as well as first-hand tour of the pristine, oil-free beaches in our area. Tom was hosted by both the GLBT-friendly Flamingo Resort, as well as the Post Card Inn on the Beach. This visit was arranged in conjunction with the IGLTA, the International Gay and Lesbian Tourism Association.

Jim Sutton - Florida Times-Union – May 24-26

We would like to extend a special thanks to the Island's End Resort for hosting this outdoor travel editor during his stay in our area to check out the fishing. Mr. Sutton is a frequent visitor to our area, who regularly writes about the wonderful fishing opportunities.

PRSA/SATW Travel & Tourism Conference/Media Event – Aspen, CO – May 25-29

VSPC's Mary Haban attended the Public Relations Society of America's Travel & Tourism media event, held in Aspen, Colorado. This four-day conference brought together the best of the best in terms of travel editors, social media experts, and CVB public relations personnel. The summit type of meeting provided the opportunity to network with travel writers from print, online, and broadcast outlets, as well as share "Best Practices."

Anamary Connery - Florida Travel + Life Magazine – May 28-30

The new Hyatt Regency Clearwater Beach Resort & Spa played host to this top-notch travel writer who was in the area to write a feature on a family summer vacation. This annual story showcases an area that's family-friendly, so we were honored to have the chance to shine.

MEDIA ASSISTANCE PROVIDED:

May 2010 Media Assistance:

May 1 – Provided photo assistance to Donna Carter, Editor, *Canadian Travel Industry Guide to Florida*.

May 3 – Fielded call from Ryan Goman, producer with *AM Tampa Bay*, requesting interview on the oil spill situation.

May 3 – Assisted Sarah Clark, Reporter with the *Orlando Sentinel*, with an interview to gain a quote regarding the situation with the oil spill.

May 3 – Provided an on camera interview to Erica Pitzi from *10 Connects News* regarding the latest with the oil spill.

May 3 – Provided on camera interview to Josh Rojas of *Bay News 9* and a phone interview to Steve Huettel of the *St. Petersburg Times* regarding the oil spill.

May 3 – Provided information on “What’s New” in the area to Mr. Leo Jakobson with *Incentive Magazine*.

May 3 – Provided on camera interviews regarding the oil spill to Brad Davis of *ABC Action News*; also did a live shot on *FOX 13 News*.

May 3 – Send photos of our area to Mr. Ian Titcomb of *TravMedia* for posting on VSPC’s online press room for Pow Wow, the largest travel show in the world.

May 4 – Fielded call from Dalia Dangerfield with *Bay News 9* regarding the proactive approach we are taking to let people know oil has not reached our beaches.

May 4 – Provided photo assistance to Yoshimi Kanazawa, Photo Editor for *Michelin Travel Guides*.

May 5 – Assisted Canadian Golf Editor, David Cowx from *Tee to Green Golf Magazine* with information on area golf both here and in the Orlando area – as he requested.

May 5 – Provided an interview to Mitch Perry of *Creative Loafing*.

May 5 – Call from Lauren Crawford of *US Travel Association* about the new Power of Travel Coalition.

May 5 – DT Minich did an interview with Mitch Stacy of the *Associated Press*.

May 5 – Responded to email from Lorna Reeves of *TeaTime Magazine* about her upcoming visit to the area to check out tea rooms.

May 6 – Responded to call from Carson Chambers of *ABC Action News* in Tampa regarding a request for an on camera interview about the perception that it's unsafe to visit our beaches.

May 6 – Send out destination B-Roll to Allegiant Airlines; footage will be used in a commercial promoting the St. Pete/Clearwater area.

May 6 – Provided additional information on the area to Lorna Reeves of *TeaTime Magazine* regarding her upcoming visit.

May 6 – Provided interview to Cindy Lane of the *Anna Maria Sun* regarding the 1993 tanker spill and how this compares.

May 6 – Sent B-Roll footage of our area to Mike Derouin, Lead Feature Producer, *NFL Network*.

May 10 – Fielded call from Chris Chmura of *FOX 13 News* about what we're doing to let people know the beaches are open.

May 10 – Provided an interview regarding the oil spill to Steve Nichols of *FOX 13 News*.

May 10 – Fielded call from Mark Douglas of *WFLA-TV; News Channel 8* about how the oil has impacted hotel bookings.

May 10 – Responded to email from Donna Airoidi of *Successful Meetings Magazine* on how the oil is impacting meetings in our area.

May 10 – Provided correct information on our area regarding the oil spill to Jessica Brady at *AAA South Magazine* in response to article published telling travelers not to come here.

May 11 – Correspondence from Mike Baginski of *Travel Courier* (Canada) regarding a contest winner and to let us know the article on the Dali Museum was published.

May 11 – Provided interview to the following media outlets regarding the oil spill: *WFLA970* – Sharon Parker; *Bay News 9* – Dalia Dangerfield; *WFLA-TV News Channel 8* – Samara Sodos; *Fox 13 News* and *10 Connects News*.

May 12 – Provided update on oil spill to Verónica Torresín, *The Unique Places*, a South American publication.

May 12 – Fielded call from Jeff Butera of *ABC Action News* for an on camera interview to address: misinformation getting to international travelers and how they don't understand or tend

to not know the geography of the state, historically what the 1993 oil spill was like and what could potentially happen here based on that accident.

May 14 – Provided phone interview to Margaret Cashill from the *Tampa Bay Business Journal* regarding the oil spill.

May 14 – Assisted Stephen Fountaine, Associate Publisher of *Canadian Traveller* with his accommodations request.

May 17 – Provided interview to Valerie Ingram with *970 WFLA-AM* regarding the oil spill.

May 18 – Correspond with Lorna Reeves of *TeaTime Magazine* regarding her accommodations.

May 19 – Responded to call from Reporter Don Gremaise of *ABC Action News* regarding information he had heard about cancellations due to oil spill.

May 19 – Interview with Erica Pitzi of *10 Connects News* regarding the oil spill.

May 20 – Provided a phone interview to Dan Weitzner from *LOCAL 6, CBS* affiliate in Orlando regarding the oil spill situation.

May 20 – Interview with Ted Jackovics of the *Tampa Tribune* regarding oil spill latest.

May 23 – Provided information on the Taste of Pinellas to Dale Sanders – Photojournalist.

May 24 – Provided interview to *Florida Trend Magazine* regarding latest on oil spill.

May 25 – Responded to request from travel photographer Jeff Greenberg regarding a “fast pass” to use to get into all the attractions.

May 25 – Assisted Jay Bemis, Editor, *WhereTraveler.com* with images of the area.

May 25 – Provided on camera interview to Don Germaise of *ABC Action News* regarding oil cancellations and all the great deals available this weekend and summer.

May 25 – Interview with Steve Huettel of the *St. Petersburg Times* regarding outlook for Memorial Day Weekend vs. oil perception.

May 26 – The following media outlets requested and were granted interviews with regard to the latest on the oil spill: Steve Huettel of the *St. Petersburg Times* re: AAA survey for oil-spill related travel; Ray Reyes, *Tampa Tribune* re: the oil spill vs. tourism for the holiday weekend; Erica Pitzi, *10 Connects News*; Elizabeth Dinh *ABC Action News*; Anna Tataris *Bay News 9*.

May 28 – Interview with Mike Deeson of *10 Connects News* regarding the Book with Confidence Guarantee.

May 28 – Interview with *Bay News 9* regarding several Gulf Coast Beaches in Florida not making Dr. Beach's List for 2010.

ASSISTING VISIT FLORIDA:

During the month of May the Public Relations Team kicked into high gear to provide timely information that was accurate about the oil spill situation to the state tourism agency. In addition to this urgent situation, we continued to also provide 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. We also participated on several committee conference calls, and webinars to keep up to date on the latest news and upcoming events to assist in our strategic planning.

May 3 – Sent our “What’s New” press release to Mary Warmka in the Public Relations Department with VISIT FLORIDA for use in their press materials at Pow Wow.

May 4 – Participated in the VISIT FLORIDA Communications Committee Conference call to discuss the latest on the oil spill.

May 10 - Worked with VISIT FLORIDA's Lauren Tjaden to fact check copy.

ASSISTING THE INDUSTRY & THE CVB & OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

May 3 – Worked with VSPC's Advertising department on securing Ambassadors for the Tourism Rally on May 11th.

May 3 – Worked with Jeni Hatter of the Clearwater Marine Aquarium about CMA providing animals for the Tourism Rally.

May 3 – Contacted the Tampa Bay & Company's Public Relations Team about collateral to be used for the Tourism Rally.

May 4 – Teamed up with VSPC's Education department and Tampa Bay & Co. to plan the Tourism Rally speakers and agenda.

May 5 – Confirm with Leinani Bernabe that Lowry Park Zoo can bring animals to the Tourism Rally.

May 6 – Updated our Ambassadors about their role at the Tourism Rally.

May 6 – Provided B-Roll footage of the area to Lindsey Guthrie of Tampa Bay & Co. to submit to the NFL regarding the Super Bowl bid.

May 6 – Work with Internet Marketing Team to upload batch of local media to Simpleview.

May 6 – Corresponded with Kathy White of the Dali Museum regarding logistics for the Post Pow Wow South American Fam Tour.

May 9 – Responded to email from Oliver Kugler of Sunset Vistas regarding a travel writer named Scott Donahue. He asked if we worked with or had heard of him.

May 7 – Worked the National Tourism Week Luncheon at the Tradewinds Island Resort.

May 11 – Attended the Tourism Rally at Tampa International Airport.

May 13 – Worked with Jim Wilson of Fort De Soto Park to confirm facts about the Paws Playground for a piece that would run in Coastal Living Magazine on dog friendly beaches.

May 14 – Call with TBO.com and the City of Clearwater about hosting their webcams on the VSPC homepage.

May 14 – Fielded a request from Donna Rodriguez of B.R. Guest/Post Card Inn – regarding them attending the Pow Wow show.

May 14 – Worked with Tampa Bay & Co. and the Tampa Bay Rays to provide complimentary tickets to the game to travel journalist Luca Centoni.

May 17 – Work with Phil Henderson about arranging complimentary ride for an Irish Tour Operator.

May 18 – Contact Kelly Sutton at the Marriott Suites Clearwater Beach on Sand Key about the Post Pow Wow Fam they were hosting.

May 18 – Responded to inquiry from David Connelly of the Museum of Fine Arts asking us what percentage of our tourists are British.

May 18 – Responded to email from Jessica R. Eilerman, MA, Director, Public Policy & Tourism St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce, regarding their president & CEO receiving a call from an angry member regarding an interview he heard on WFLA regarding people cancelling reservations to come to the area because of tar balls. She wanted to give us the heads up in case they (WFLA) hadn't reached out to us for a comment to enforce that we are in fact OPEN for business and our beaches are currently unaffected by the spill.

May 19 – Team up with VSPC's Hospitality Education Department to call the US Travel Association to discuss the Power of Travel Coalition.

May 20-21 – Accompany Post Pow Wow Fam.

May 28 – Received an inquiry from Trish Riley, Co-Director: Gainesville Environmental Film and Arts Festival regarding bringing a meeting/group here, forwarded to the Meetings & Conventions Department.

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: **“VSPC Issues Statement on Louisiana Oil Spill,” “Area Tourism Industry Stands Up for Travel,” “Louisiana Oil Spill Update (#4),” “VSPC Now Tracking Accommodation Cancellations,” “Tampa Bay Wins 2012 Republican Convention Bid,” “Louisiana Oil Spill Update (#6),” “Louisiana Oil Spill Update (#7),” and “BIG EAST Baseball Tourney, ESPN Comes to Clearwater.”**

We continue training 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.

PRESS RELEASES & E-NEWS & INDUSTRY ALERTS:

May 3 – Industry alert titled, **“VSPC Issues Statement on Louisiana Oil Spill,”** was sent.

May 5 – Press release entitled, **“Area Tourism Industry Stands Up for Travel”** was sent to the media and the industry.

May 10- Sent a reminder to industry/media to attend the Tourism Rally at Tampa Int’l Airport.

May 10 – Industry alert titled, **“VSPC Now Tracking Accommodation Cancellations”** sent.

May 10 – Sent out **“Louisiana Oil Spill Update (#4)”** to industry partners.

May 12 – TDC Re-cap sent to the industry and to the media.

May 12 – Press release entitled, **“Tampa Bay Wins 2012 Republican Convention Bid: Hillsborough, Pinellas join forces to bring \$170 million gathering to Bay Area,”** was sent to the media and the industry.

May 14 – Industry alert titled, “**Louisiana Oil Spill Update (#6)**” was sent.

May 19 – Distribute “**Louisiana Oil Spill Update (#7)**” to industry.

May 21 – E-News sent to the industry and media.

May 25 – Press release entitled, “**BIG EAST Baseball Tourney, ESPN Comes to Clearwater: Bright House Field Set to Host Annual Eight-Team College Championship,**” was sent to the media and the industry.

UK PR Firm and German Media Activities:

Please refer to separate reports from each office.

Outdoor/Nature PR Activities: May 2010

Bill AuCoin & Associates, Inc.

- Arranged tarpon fishing trip for Jim Sutton, outdoors writer for the Jacksonville Times-Union. His May visit was cancelled due to a death in the family but will be rescheduled, probably in June.
- Discussed feature ideas and a June visit by Steve Waters, outdoors writer, South Florida Sun-Sentinel.
- Continued planning for a July visits by three newspaper outdoor writers: Bryan Hendricks, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette; Ron Strait, San Antonio Express News; David Sikes, Corpus Christi Caller-Times.
- Promoted St. Petersburg as the new Robin Capital of America, including a news brief on this phenomenon in the May issue of The AuCoin Report, which was emailed to 4,000 media desks.

UPCOMING MEDIA VISITS - TRADE SHOWS - PRESS GROUPS:

- 1 – Society of American Travel Writers Atlantic Conference/Media Event – Atlanta - June 3-6
- 2 – Florida Association of CVB (FACVB) Marketing Summit – Orlando, FL – June 2-4
- 3 – Spanish TV Crew - **Españoles por el Mundo** – June 9-11
- 4 – Paul Hughes from the *Scottish Sun Newspaper* – UK – June 9-24
- 5 – Public Relations Society of America Sunshine District Conference – Jupiter, FL – June 17-19
- 6 – Lorna Reeves visit - *TeaTime Magazine* – June 21-23
- 7 – Christian Heeb Visit, *America Journal & Globetroller Magazine* – June 24-26
- 8 – Satellite Media Tour with Orbitz – Hyatt Regency Clearwater Beach – June 30