

# **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

## **January 2009**

**Prepared by:**  
**Mary Haban**  
Senior Manger, Public Relations

### **MEDIA VISITS, TRADE SHOWS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

#### **Lisa Martin visit – Metro Parent Magazine – January 1-6**

Innisbrook Resort & Golf Club played host to this talented travel writer who was in the area to write a family and feature article. Metro Parent Magazine, a regional publication out of Southwest Michigan, is a monthly publication with 250,000 readers, the majority of which are females. The magazine's readers have an average household income of \$73,000. In November, their web site had over 100,000 page views.

The story will feature the host hotel and will appear online and in print in either the publication's May or June issues. Because of the short deadline, the magazine is also offering the host hotel a free half-page ad to appear in print in the month of their choosing (\$2,225 value).

#### **Lesley Anne Rose visit – Frommer's Guide to Florida UK Edition – January 10-12**

With the United Kingdom being the top international market for tourism for the area, we were pleased to hear that journalist Lesley Anne Rose would be coming for a visit. Ms. Rose was in town to update an ever-popular guidebook called Frommer's Guide to Florida, in which she would feature a variety of attractions in the area. The Don CeSar Beach Resort, A Loews Hotel, was kind enough to provide Ms. Rose with complimentary accommodations and show her what makes the resort and the area, so special. And for that, we are grateful.

#### **Roy Mooy visit - Kingston this Week – January 17-24**

Kingston This Week is south eastern Ontario's largest circulation newspaper. It has just undergone a major redesign and the paper now averages 80 pages. The circulation has also increased to 55,000, serving a population base of over 130,000 residents. KTW is part of the Osprey Media Group of 37 community newspapers and 21 daily papers with a combined circulation of over 800,000, in 50 markets across Ontario, Canada. Rob Mooy and his family recently visited the area to write a piece on family travel that would include family beach vacations, accommodations, entertainment, dining, attractions, museums, parks, natural history, historic sites, shopping, family and children's activities. Any special promotions aimed at Canadian visitors could also be highlighted. Three area properties were kind enough to work with Mr. Mooy to provide complimentary accommodations during his seven day stay.

### **Brian Searl visit - Insider Perks (InsiderPerks.com) – January 20-21**

The Public Relations team was contacted by the producer of this website seeking assistance with accommodations and things to see and do in the area in order to update the site. We provided all the information required. He spent the majority of his visit in the Tampa area and just came over for the day to do our piece of the story. The URL to the site is [www.insiderperks.com](http://www.insiderperks.com)

### **TWIGS (Travel Women International Golf) – January 22-24**

Every year, prior to Florida Huddle, scores of supplies and buyers participate in a special event designed to provide networking opportunities, while raising money for local charities. This year, Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater had the dubious distinction of hosting the TWIGS event at the famed Innisbrook Resort & Golf Club. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone at the resort who took the time to meet with our special guests, and for the amazing hospitality that was provided to us during our stay.

### **Florida Huddle Press Events/Media Breakfast – January 24-26**

The Public Relations division played a pivotal role in the recent Florida Huddle Conference which took place in Clearwater. Our primary responsibility was manning the media center and press room, and hosting the media breakfast. All events went off without a hitch and we were complemented for our professionalism and for rolling out the red carpet. We could not have done such a great job without the help of our industry partners; namely, The Salvador Dali Museum, which hosted the refreshments in the press room, and provided the keynote speaker for our media breakfast; and to the Holiday Inn Clearwater Beach for providing a spectacular venue for the media breakfast and all the delicious food.

### **Brad Wiegmann visit - outdoor writer (BradWiegmann.com) – January 28 – February 3**

Outdoor writer Brag Wiegmann of Arkansas flew in to visit his sister in Tarpon Springs and made it a working vacation, gathering information and pictures for articles for two Oklahoma newspapers, Stilwell Democrat-Journal and Westville Register. Bill AuCoin, our outdoors/nature PR resource, set up a kayak flats fishing expedition for Brad, who arranged others on his own. Already, two features about the flats fishing expedition in St. Petersburg and another about Sunshine Skyway tarpon fishing have been posted on his own popular website [www.bradwiegmann.com](http://www.bradwiegmann.com), including hot links to our website.

### **PGA Merchandise Show (Orlando) – January 28-30**

Each year, thousands of top golf professionals and golf media from all over the globe descend on the Sunshine State for the PGA Merchandise Show in Orlando. The event is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to network with scores of top golf writers and golf travel media. The show provides the perfect venue to select potential golf media from top outlets for upcoming golf press trips and individual visits and allows us to showcase the St. Petersburg/Clearwater golf offerings to this prestigious group of professionals. There is a media center at the event, with events conducive to making successful connections and conducting business. The event has always been a fantastic way for us to stay connected with one of our core assets – golf, and to capture the interest and attention of new golf media and publications.

## **MEDIA ASSISTANCE PROVIDED:**

### **November 2009 Media Assistance:**

Assisted a travel writer from *Doctor's Review Magazine* (Canada) with information on places to stay and things to do while here on Spring Training.

Spoke with Tampa Tribune Reporter Ted Jackovics for an article.

Spoke with Steve Carnie of 970 WFLA-AM for drive time this afternoon.

Spoke with Steve Nichols of FOX-13 News.

Spoke with Donna Carter of *Dreamscapes Magazine* regarding Florida feature for the winter/spring edition.

Provided editorial assistance to Maxine Cass for *Smart Meetings Magazine* then connected her with the Meetings Department for an interview.

Provided editorial assistance to Sandra Kitchen, Publisher, of *Dreamscapes Magazine*.

Assisted Maya Robinson of Nippon Television Network (NTV), a Japanese film company, with B-Roll footage of the area.

Liaise with the production crew of *Wedding TV (UK)* for potential media visit.

Discuss locations for *American Baby Magazine* photo shoot.

Coordinate discussion with Ted Jackovics of the *Tampa Tribune* and our staff regarding the station domination campaign.

Picked up B-Roll footage for *Wedding TV* crew from Tampa Digital.

Sent VSPC logo to Mary McKenna of *TourAmerica*, i.e.

Send Annabel Mackie of *OK! Magazine* the "What's New Press Release."

Responded to email from Brian Searl of *InsiderPerks.com* and confirmed his assignment.

Followed up with Geoff Dobson of *Wedding TV* regarding the recent visit to the area.

Took photos of Northshore Park Playground for *American Baby Magazine*.

Field call from Ted Jackovics of the *Tampa Tribune* regarding snowbird travel; suggested he contact Walter Klages as we don't track those numbers.

Responded to inquiring journalist James Weaver about a potential visit; provided him with information and links about the destination.

Continued discussing potential visit with Brian Searl of *InsiderPerks.com*, specifically him creating a video for the host hotel.

Corresponded with Rob Mooy of *Kingston this Week* about which hotels he'll be staying in.

### **December 2009 Media Assistance:**

Provided information on the area and spas to Canadian Travel writer, Chris Ryall.

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

Contacted the Don CeSar Beach Resort to alert them that BET TV Network would be in the area and possibly checking out the property for a future show.

Provided fact-checking assistance to Jennifer Dome of *Southern Living Magazine*.

Assisted Gary Bernloehr, Art Director, of *Florida Trend Magazine* with hi-res photos of Clearwater Beach and BeachWalk, by connecting him with Anita Treiser at the Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Provided Phil Hill from WFLA-TV with a DVD Sales loop for use in the Outback Bowl Special.

Provided photo of Honeymoon Island State Park to Nate Long at VISIT FLORIDA to send along to a journalist doing a story.

Corresponded with Mary Lou Jansen of [www.VisitSouth.com](http://www.VisitSouth.com) about the launch of this new travel-related website and how we can be featured and contribute.

Responded to Terry Conway, writer for *Delaware County Times*, about potential upcoming visit; directed him to our media page for more information.

Continued discussing potential visit with Brian Searl of [www.INSIDERPERKS.COM](http://www.INSIDERPERKS.COM), specifically which hotels he contacted to stay during his visit.

Returned call to Margaret Cashill of Tampa Bay Business Journal; coordinate interview for her with David regarding trends in international travel.

Provided assistance to German travel writer Suzanne Jock about loose ends from her visit for the Clearwater Jazz Holiday FAM; contacted Anita Treiser with Clearwater Chamber for photos.

Corresponded with Canadian writer Rob Mooy of *Kingston this Week* about his upcoming visit.

Emailed Rob Mooy of *Kingston this Week* for contact information for attractions he was interested in seeing during his upcoming visit.

Responded to Anna Reinert of *Orlando Today*, she was looking for information for family day-trips to the area.

Email Brian Searl of [www.INSIDERPERKS.COM](http://www.INSIDERPERKS.COM) to inform him that we would be happy to try and secure a media rate for his upcoming stay.

Fielded call from Alexis Bourkoulas with *Metro Parent Magazine* in Michigan inquiring about a visit on Christmas Day; correspond about magazine demographics and specifics of the visit.

Respond to email from Roby Mooy of *Kingston this Week* about sunset times for his visit.

Fielded call from Steve Huettel with the *St. Petersburg Times* about a story on 2010 travel.

#### **ASSISTING VISIT FLORIDA:**

During the month of January 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.

#### **ASSISTING THE INDUSTRY & THE CVB & OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:**

January 6 – The entire PR Team attended the Epiphany Celebration in Tarpon Springs to film a special segment for YouTube and our new website promoting the event to the media.

January 10 – Participated in a conference call with Debbie Meihls and the staff of IronGirl about promoting the race on our social media pages.

January 11 – Attended the Salvador Dali Museum's special 365 until opening event and took video for posting on our social media channels.

January 14 – Met with Simpleview expert to go over the system and contacts.

January 21 – Attended the Clearwater Marine Aquarium’s turtle release and captured video for posting on our social media channels.

January 22 – Field call from Mark Hubbard with Hubbard’s Marina about using images for his brochures; directed him to our CleanPix site.

January 24 – Worked the press room at Florida Huddle; assist with evening special events.

January 26 – Hosted the Florida Huddle Media Breakfast.

### **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: *“Premier Travel Show to Huddle in 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:**

January 13 –TDC Meeting Re-cap sent to industry.

January 22 – Press Release entitled, **“Premier Travel Show to ‘Huddle’ in Clearwater; International buyers, statewide industry reps converge on area to speak sunshine,** sent to media and the industry.

January 22 – E-News sent to industry.

### **UK PR Firm and German Media Activities:**

Please refer to separate reports from each office.

## **Outdoor/Nature PR Activities: January 2010**

Bill AuCoin & Associates, Inc.

- Video of anglers fishing for snook under residential dock lights in Pass-a-Grille was posted on the Detroit Free Press website -- Freep.com -- by outdoor writer Eric Sharp, who shot the video on a December visit. The video showed the night-lit towers of the Don Cesar Hotel and the narration referenced the hotel as being close to the fishing action. The angler was outdoor writer Bob Kornegay, who wrote two major feature articles about the superior sport fishing in the St. Petersburg area that appeared in the Dec. 20 issue of the Albany (GA) Herald.
- Wrote text introducing the Clearwater and St. Petersburg sections of a new and increasingly popular website -- FloridabyWater.com- and provided boating images to supplement the section.
- Provided information and images to James Hall, editor of Bassmaster Magazine, for a March-issue article about fishing for bass in Lake Tarpon. A sidebar image will rewarded the Tarpon Springs sponge docks.
- Provided information about fishing and other water-related recreations to Lisa C. Cheng, assistant editor of Travel & Leisure Magazine.
- Provided information about fishing opportunities in the St. Petersburg-Clearwater area during the Grapefruit League baseball season to travel writer Doc Lawrence for his column.
- Set up a Feb. 1 snook and baby tarpon kayak-fishing expedition in St. Petersburg for outdoor writer Brad Wiegmann.
- Spoke about eco-tourism, adventure travel, and voluntourism opportunities in the St. Petersburg-Clearwater area at the Florida Huddle media breakfast.

## **UPCOMING MEDIA VISITS - TRADE SHOWS - PRESS GROUPS:**

1 - Visit Florida Chicago Media Mission – February 21-26