

HOSPITALITY EDUCATION

March 2011

Rhonda Sanborn

Hospitality Education

EDUCATION

Industry Partnership

The Honda Grand Prix event is one of the CVB's and St. Petersburg's signature events. For the last few years we have supported the event financially and also with volunteer power. Several people from staff manage the credentials office for the entire weekend and work the various information booths. This year we also added another point of contact for our visitor at Gate 5 beside the City of St. Petersburg's tented area by the main entrance. The city distributed local information and race brochures and we were a point of contact for information regarding the general area. Several CVB staff volunteered for a two shifts Saturday and Sunday; not only passing out visitor guides and area maps but warm greetings and friendly smiles. Another touch point from the CVB was a workshop the Education Dept. participated in for Taxi Cab drivers along with the City. A number of cab companies were present (even a driver for the horse drawn carriages). In a brief couple of hours the drivers learned: about their invaluable roles as ambassadors to our destination; what other great events were happening over the course of the weekend they might benefit from; how to respectfully transport people with disabilities; race routes; road closures; the best pick up and drop off locations; and most importantly how to be safe. The drivers were very appreciative of the information as well as the notebooks that Kim Tyer put together for them chalk full of information.

Youth Leadership Pinellas is sub group of Leadership Pinellas and organized through the YMCA of the Suncoast. The youth program is in its 16th year and has ongoing learning events from November to May. They are a group of 30 students, 10th, 11th, 12th grades from 7 different high schools throughout the county. These students are actively involved in their schools and interested in developing their leadership skills through this program. One of their learning field trips is called, "Government Day" which includes a visit to the 911 and Emergency Response location, Solid Waste, the County Court House, the CVB and the Clearwater Chamber. My portion of the visit involved presenting how all of these different government groups are intertwined to build a community that we are proud to live, work and play. This in turn also makes for a great destination for people to visit and adds to the citizen's quality of life. The students particularly enjoyed hearing how hard work pays off and a success story from a young man who was in the Chambers Young Professionals Association. He went to the same high school as some of them, was barely older than these students with several businesses of his own.

Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce wanted to show their appreciation to visitors during the peak weekend of Tourism in March and decided on a button campaign. Along with a tourism fact sheet, they produced several thousand large buttons that read, "We  Visitors" "Thanks for visiting our destination!". They sent out requests to their hotel partners and restaurants along Gulf Boulevard asking who would like to participate and wear the buttons over the weekend.

Several ambassadors were asked to help distribute them in a one half day rollout. The response was so overwhelming we ran out and had to distribute less than people asked for. This is a program worth pursuing on a broader level given the enthusiasm of our hotel partners and feedback from visitors. A simple thank you goes a long way.

Junior Achievement is an organization that helps youth gain a deeper appreciation for the value education plays in obtaining their future goals. Programs are scripted for every grade level and are progressive learning opportunities facilitated by someone from the business community. Typically these are one-two hour sessions for six weeks. However, once a year Jr. Achievement composes a half day very condensed version called “Our City Day”. Elected officials and community leaders are invited to participate to lead students in a series of thorough and fun, but brief set of activities that illustrate the importance of civic planning to a city’s economic development, by building their own version of a city. The program studies careers, the skills people need to work in specific careers, and how businesses contribute to a city. The student’s roleplay simple financial transactions and learn why banks and other business entities are an important part of a city. Because of the major role tourism plays in the economy, a new module was added this year for them to decide how they would spend their leisure time. Deborah Holland and I partnered for this program at Mildred Helms 3rd grade class.

Professional Development

- Webinar on the future of Attractions
- Webinar FACVB

Value of Tourism Presentations

- County Volunteer Orientation, Heritage Village
- Feather Sound Rotary Club

HOSPITALITY

VSPC Representation

- Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber (TBBCoC), Board of Directors meeting
- TBBCoC Mixer The Pub Restaurant
- St. Pete Beach Mayoral Candidates panel
- County Volunteer Coordinators lunch and learn
- Toastmasters Regional Contest
- Health Fair Expo with Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber
- Site Visit and Tour of PARC
- County Budget Meeting, Palm Harbor High School
- Harry Nicklaus’s 80th celebration at the Sirata
- Treasure Island Spring Fling volunteer
- Habitat for Humanity with MPI women’s group
- Disability Foundation fundraiser

VSPC Planning

- National Travel & Tourism Luncheon
- Arts Tampa Bay mini brochure
- Autodesk meeting 80 people (the company I previously worked for in CA)
- Relay for Life Charity Event on Treasure Island