

PUBLIC RELATIONS

March 2012

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VISITING MEDIA:

Harry Guyer Visit – Bedford Gazette – March 5-6

Outdoor writer Harry Guyer visited the area in March to experience the spectacular and diverse fishing opportunities offered. His column will appear in the Bedford (PA) Gazette and its chain of about 30 small newspapers (dailies and weeklies). If all of the newspapers use the column, the circulation approaches 200,000. Since he was here for the day, Mr. Guyer stayed with friends.

Uta Van Steen Visit - Geo Saison Germany – March 9-11

GeoSaison is a top travel publication focused on the luxury lifestyle market. Ms. Van Steen, the editor of this illustrious magazine, came to our area to write an article on Pass-a-Grille. Her photographer, Monika Hoefler, visited the area a few months ago and chronicled her trip with some amazing photos to accompany this story, which should hit newsstands in the next few months. During her stay, Ms. Van Steen was lucky enough to be hosted by two very generous partners, namely, the Inn on the Beach in Pass-a-Grille, and the Postcard Inn on St. Pete Beach.

Brent Long Visit- Club Link Magazine – March 9-18

This seasoned golf writer is a regular visitor to our area and a active contributor to several golf publications, namely Club Link Magazine, aimed at the Ontario golf market. While in the area, Mr. Long took in several other activities, including a few Spring Training games (Blue Jays and Phillies), visited our beautiful beaches, and took part in a Canadian past-time – a hockey game courtesy of the Tampa Bay Lightning.

Transitions Championship PGA Tour – March 15-18

International and local media descended on St. Pete/Clearwater for this annual PGA Event held Innisbrook Resort & Golf Club. Writers from a variety of daily, local and broadcast outlets, including both travel and sports media, covered the tournament in the four straight days it was played. From qualifying rounds, to a quadruple sudden death playoff, the event did not disappoint. A myriad of radio, newspaper and television interviews took place, giving the destination the ultimate chance to shine.

John Kernaghan Visit - *Toronto Star* – March 26-30

Spring training is a huge reason for tourists to visit the St. Pete/Clearwater area. So when this talented travel writer approached us about featuring that very subject; it was a done deal. With credits that include bylines in the *Toronto Star*, *Hamilton Spectator* and *FYI Magazine*, Mr. John Kernaghan's articles have the potential to reach more than two million people in Southern Ontario – a prime international feeder market for our area. He arranged his own transport and accommodations, only requested assistance with Spring Training tickets, which were made possible thanks to the generosity of the Phillies and the Blue Jays organizations. His article should be in print in the next few months.

Morten Scholz: *Denmark's Guide to FL* – March 29-April 1

Mr. Morten Wilhelm Scholz, author of Denmark's premiere travel guide to Florida & The Deep South, visited our area late March to update content for his Guidebook. Morten's book is the only original guidebook covering Florida in Scandinavia and is published in Danish, Norwegian and Dutch. It's always in print, and it's available in most major bookstores, department stores and airports. He is preparing a comprehensive update of the book and his visit to the area will result in an extensive section on Florida's Gulf Coast. A special thanks goes out to the Snug Harbor Inn on Madeira Beach for hosting him for three nights.

SOCIAL MEDIA INITIATIVES:

Throughout the month, the VSPC Public Relations Team continued to monitor and post updates on Facebook and Twitter 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, PressBriefs, and VSPC's media page: "*MLB's Best Swing into St. Pete/Clearwater for Spring Training*," "*TripAdvisor names St. Pete Beach #1 in the US, #5 in the world*," "*PGA Tour Set to Tee Off in St. Pete/Clearwater*" and "*ABC, Honda Grand Prix Speed into St. Pete this Weekend*"

PRESS RELEASES, E-NEWSLETTERS AND INDUSTRY ALERTS:

The VSPC Public Relations team has continued to fine-tune VSPC's new industry e-newsletter. The weekly publication, which we're calling *CVBeat*, debuted in October.

March 2 – Press Release titled, "*MLB's Best Swing into St. Pete/Clearwater for Spring Training*" was sent to the media and industry.

March 5 – *CVBeat* titled, "*CVBeat: VSPC Prepares for World's Largest Travel Show*" was sent to the media and industry.

March 7 – Press Release titled, “*TripAdvisor names St. Pete Beach #1 in the US, #5 in the world*” was sent to the media and industry.

March 14 – Press Release titled, “*PGA Tour Set to Tee Off in St. Pete/Clearwater*” was sent to the media and industry.

March 14 – CVBeat titled, “*CVBeat: Northeast Blitz Puts VSPC's Focus on Boston, Washington DC*” was sent to the media and industry.

March 16 – TDC Recap titled, “*VSPC Website Traffic Surges in 2012, Travel Channel Host Touts Clearwater Beach*” was sent to the media and industry.

March 21 – CVBeat titled, “*CVBeat: Spring Media Blitz, Scottish Coverage, New Meetings Guide*” was sent to the media and industry.

March 22 – Press Release titled, “*ABC, Honda Grand Prix Speed into St. Pete this Weekend*” was sent to the media and industry.

March 28 – CVBeat titled, “*CVBeat: Southwest Vacations Launching Ad Blitz, VSPC Pinterest Debuts*” was sent to the media and industry.

NYC PR Firm, UK PR Firm & German Media Activities:

Please refer to separate reports from each office.

Outdoor/Nature PR Activities: March 2012

- Hosted Darla and Harry Guyer (Bedford (PA) Gazette) trout fishing with Capt. Tyson Wallerstein in Clearwater. Guyer published a 44-column inch column in the March 17-18 weekend edition including web site addresses for the captain and Visitstpeteclearwater.com. The Gazette has a paid circulation of 10,000. Guyer said his column also runs in a number of other weeklies, print and online in Western Pennsylvania, with a potential total circulation of about 200,000.
- Hosted Eric Sharp, outdoors editor of the Detroit Free Press, for tarpon fishing at the Sunshine Skyway Bridge with Captain Rob Gorta. Alas, no tarpon were caught -- it's still early in the season. Sharp also interviewed Kathryn Guindon of the Florida Wildlife Research Institute in St. Pete. She heads up the "Tarpongenetics" program to learn more about the life cycle and migrations of tarpon and populations. Sharp indicated he will return in the summer to try to close the loop on an article and shoot pictures of tarpon being caught.
- Wrote two Facebook features for consideration: *Celebrate (sort of) St. Patricks Day on the Beach* (subject: Great American Beach Cleanup) and *What's that Glow out in the Gulf?* (Subject: Fisherman's Paradise Resort).

- Researched and emailed information to Lloyd Daugherty, host of *Eating Southern in the South* and *Dixie Angler* radio programs in Tennessee. Daugherty plans a visit to Clearwater in April.
- Coordinated response to writer Lindsay Neff of www.Shermanstravel.com for information supporting its selection of St. Petersburg as one of the top 10 bicycle cities in America.
- Investigated the "Ultimate Fishing Town" promotion by World Fishing Network (WFN).
- Pitched travel writer Myscha Theriault on including the Great American Beaches Cleanup in St. Petersburg-Clearwater, a beaches destination program coinciding with the Great American Cleanup.

UPCOMING MEDIA VISITS - TRADE SHOWS - PRESS GROUPS:

- 1 – Visit Florida NYC & Toronto Media Receptions – April 17-21
- 2 – Stephen Klug Visit – *Maerkischer Markt Germany* – March 9-11