

Convention Department Wins Major Bids

The convention department has been busy hosting site visits, attending trade shows and securing new conventions. In September Dianna Douglas, regional sales manager, attended the HSMIA MEET (Meetings, Events, Education, Technology) Conference with partners - Hilton Shreveport and Shreveport Convention Center. They had about 30 appointments.

In that same month, Douglas represented the destination at the Better Business Bureau International Assembly Conference. That conference will be held at Sam's Town Casino in April 2015.

Sept. 26, the board of directors for the Southeastern Association of School Business Officials and Louisiana Association of School Business Officials announced they would hold a joint conference at the Hilton Shreveport and Shreveport Convention Center in 2016 representing 1,200 room nights. Courtyard by Marriott at the Outlets at Louisiana Boardwalk was the host hotel for the 26-member executive board meeting.

Douglas is excited to announce that after a long and arduous bid process, the 40 & 8 Committee will hold their 2017 conference here at DiamondJacks Casino Resort. This group will generate approximately 1,350 room nights.

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*Appointing
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news from shreveport-bossier convention & tourist bureau

TRAVEL TALK

November - December 2014

Sports Commission Lands Three Major Events

The Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission (SBSC) has landed three major events – 2016 ASA Annual Convention, 2016 Southern Bowling Congress and 2015 Sports Relations Conference. Year-to-date the SBSC has hosted more than 32 groups. In 2015, it is expected to support more than 50 groups.

When asked about the success of the SBSC, Kelly Wells, vice president of the sports commission said it hinges on service. Some of the things that he and his team offer include volunteer assistance, transportation logistics, special arrangements with local attractions, advance planning with emergency medical services, and assistance with permitting, security and law enforcement coordination.



The Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission has hosted more than 32 groups.

events. Future sporting events include Regions Archery, LHSAA All-Star Football Game, Holiday Wrestling Classic and USTA Senior Tennis Tournament.

With the recent passing of the Cargill Park bond for \$2.7 million, sporting events on the west end of Shreveport will thrive once again. Major improvements and renovations to the softball/baseball field complexes include: field grading and drainage, turf and irrigation

improvements, lighting and fencing adjustments, dugout enlargement, spectator shade structures, playground, restroom/concession building replacement, landscape areas and driveway and parking overlays.

For more information about sporting events in Shreveport-Bossier, visit www.shreveportbossiersports.com.

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Dates to Remember:

Hospitality Breakfast

- Nov. 5** 8 a.m., Homewood Suites/ Hilton Garden Inn
- Dec. 5** 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Bureau Open House, Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau downtown office

Hotel and Lodging Association

- Nov. 5** Noon, Louisiana State Fair
- Dec. 7** Noon, Venue TBD

For more HLA info, contact Cindy Lubbe at cindy.lubbe@dimdev.com

Shreveport-Bossier Attractions Association Social Media Seminar

- Nov. 3** 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Clarion Hotel
To RSVP call 318-222-9391

Log on to www.shreveport-bossier.org/partners for industry events and updates

Helping Reunion Planners is Big Business

The Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau and its partners hosted a free reunion planning workshop, a "one-stop-shop" for those involved in planning an upcoming family, class or military reunion, Monday, Oct. 6 in the Roundup Room on the Louisiana State Fairgrounds. Attendees learned how to plan a reunion itinerary, how to select a host hotel, tips for scouting event sites and more. The workshop included a "How to Plan a Reunion" presentation and a meet-and-greet with hospitality industry partners who focus on reunions.

Some may not realize that reunions are big business. Research shows that a family, military or class reunion with 75 attendees will have an estimated economic impact of \$70,500, including spending related to hotel accommodations, meals, shopping and transportation. As a result of the workshop, Kevin Flowers, reunion service specialist, received five requests for proposals. A future workshop is being planned for February 2015.

For reunion planning tips and information contact Kevin Flowers, reunion service specialist, at kflowers@sbctb.org or (318) 429-0625.



Reunion seminar generates community interest.



Shreveport, LA 71101
629 Spring Street
Convention & Tourist Bureau

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“Bossier City is located in the northwest corner of Louisiana, across the Red River from sister-city Shreveport. The city is a modern-day Southern river town, complete with four riverboat casinos, outlet shopping, and a 14-screen movie theater. Bossier City is a great spot for regional foodies, with plenty of unique Cajun-style cuisine and Southern barbecue to be had. The big industries here are tourism and recreational gaming, though there are also many military jobs in the area.”

Money Magazine

FUNGUIDE! Your Bureau at Work

Calendar of Events

- 11/1 David Lamar Jr. and the L&L Crew. Boomtown Casino.
- 11/2 Highland Open Studio Tours Sunday.
- 11/6 Shreveport-Bossier Mavericks. Hirsch Coliseum
- 11/8 Chimp Chat & Chew. Chimp Haven.
- 11/13 Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. Outlets at Louisiana Boardwalk.
- 11/15 1964-The Tribute to The Beatles. Strand Theatre.
- 11/15 Let it Glow, Let It Glow with Paper. Sci-port: Louisiana's Science Center.
- 11/15 Cher D2K Tour. CenturyLink Center.
- 11/15 Bass Pro Shops Christmas Parade. Bass Pro Shops at the Outlets at Louisiana Boardwalk.
- 11/21 Willie Nelson. Horseshoe Casino.
- 11/28-12/23 Christmas in Roseland. American Rose Center.
- 11/29 Casting Crowns. CenturyLink Center.
- Thru 11/30 Nolan H. Simmons. East Bank Gallery.
- 12/3-12/7 The Crucible. Shreveport Little Theatre.
- 12/4 & 12/12 Candlelight Christmas Home Tours. Pickup Festival Plaza.
- 12/5-12/28 Holiday Light Safari
- 12/6 Christmas on Caddo Fireworks Festival. Earl G. Williamson Park
- 12/6 Country Christmas Festival. Vivian.
- 12/6 Breakfast with Santa & Mrs. Clause. Sci-port: Louisiana's Science Center.
- 12/6 Cajun Christmas Festival. Cash Point.
- 12/6 Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. Strand Theatre.
- 12/12-1/4/15 Winterfest. CenturyLink.
- 12/13 Cowboy Christmas. Cash Point.
- 12/13 Ascend Combat. Municipal Auditorium.
- 12/20 Holiday Pops on the Stage. Riverview Theater.
- 12/27 Duck Commander Independence Bowl. Independence Stadium.

Submit your events to www.sbfunguide.com today to be included in future promotional efforts.

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for a **fun** time... **CLICK!**



Kevin Flowers, convention sales coordinator

Kevin Flowers bidden on three military reunions, two for next year and one for 2016. Of those, he has already secured the U-Tapao Reunion, which will be held here, May 1-4, 2015 and have an estimated attendance of 125.

Chris Jay, public relations and social media manager, attended a LTPA partner event spotlighting the Louisiana Culinary Trails program in Birmingham, Ala., Sept. 21-24. Jay met one-on-one with members of the editorial teams from 10 magazines published by Birmingham-based Hoffman Media, including *Taste of the South*, *Louisiana Cookin'* and *Tea Time*. During these editorial meetings, Jay pitched the magazines on unique story ideas about the culinary culture of Shreveport-Bossier.

He hosted a group of six travel journalists for a four-day tour of Shreveport-Bossier's most unique, unusual and haunted places, "Night of the Living Travel Writers: Celebrating Weird Shreveport-Bossier," Oct. 23-26. Stops on the itinerary included ziplining at Gators & Friends, a behind-the-scenes tour of Chimp Haven, a visit to Dixie Maze Farms, live music, great food and more. All participating journalists will be writing about their experiences for publications ranging from regional magazines to national websites.

Stacy Brown, president, and **Evelyn Cassell**, Boom or Bust Byway coordinator, attended "Preserving the Historic Road" Conference in Savannah, Ga., Sept. 26-28. The conference partnered with the National Scenic Byways Foundation to provide a diverse and comprehensive conference program, which included educational sessions and informative mobile workshops to unique sites.



Melissa Small, communications coordinator

Melissa Small, communications coordinator, hosted a film inspired convention media tour, Oct. 9-12, showcasing Shreveport-Bossier as a premier convention destination. The journalists represented *Venues Today*, a magazine, newsletter and website reporting on meeting venues, and Collinson Media & Events, a publisher of three business meeting magazines for meeting planners focusing on events and destinations. The journalists visited several meeting venues where movies were filmed, sampled the Cajun and Texan cuisine, and attended the Louisiana Film Prize and the Red River Revel Arts Festival.

Dianna Douglas, regional sales manager, attended Small Market Meetings in Mesa, Ariz., Sept. 28-30. She had 25 scheduled appointments and secured five requests for proposals.

Lt. Gov. Dardenne Hosted Tourism Town Hall Meeting in Shreveport-Bossier

The Office of the Lt. Governor, Louisiana Office of Tourism and Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau hosted a Tourism Town Hall on Tuesday, Sept. 16

at the Municipal Auditorium.

The community was encouraged to bring their thoughts, ideas, input and vision for Shreveport-Bossier to discuss how the Office of the Lt. Governor and the Louisiana Office of Tourism can provide a partnership for success.

The Tourism Town Hall explored opportunities for economic development and infrastructure improvement, as well as a vision and plan for tourism's economic impact throughout the entire northwest region of Louisiana.



The community was invited to share input to improve tourism in Northwest Louisiana.



Mudbug Madness Festival Named One of the 100 Best Events by the ABA

The American Bus Association (ABA) announced that Mudbug Madness Festival, to be held on Memorial Day Weekend, May 21-24, 2015, has been designated as one of the Top 100 Events in North America for 2015 by a selection committee of experienced motorcoach and tour operators.

The annual event in downtown Shreveport is known for around-the-clock live Zydeco music and Louisiana crawfish served every imaginable way. According to ABA, inclusion in the Top 100 list indicates that Mudbug Madness Festival offers excellent value to travel professionals and motorcoach operators looking to incorporate excellent products into their itineraries.

"It's very exciting to be recognized as one of the 100 best events in North America for group travel," said Melanie Bacon, executive director



Mudbug Madness Festival offers excellent value to travel professionals.

of Downtown Shreveport Unlimited. "We strive to accommodate tour groups and motorcoach operators by offering discount admissions, convenient bus parking, and special experiences like lessons on how to eat crawfish and backstage meet and greets with some of the best-known Cajun and Zydeco entertainers."

ABA's selection committee selected Mudbug Madness Festival from hundreds of event nominations. Judges considered criteria such as the event's broad appeal, its accessibility to motorcoaches, skill at handling large groups and entertainment value.

Mudbug Madness Festival is a presentation of Downtown Shreveport Unlimited, a non-profit membership organization which serves as an advocacy group for downtown Shreveport.

Hotels, Attractions and Restaurants Partnership Needed for 2015 Travel South



Local partners met to discuss ways to promote destination at 2015 Travel South Domestic Showcase.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2015, Travel South USA will hold its Travel South Domestic Showcase in Shreveport-Bossier, March 22-25. A staple in the Southern tourism scene, Travel South Showcase brings together qualified tour operators, Southern tourism entities and nationally recognized travel media for three days of appointments, networking and fun.

Travel South Showcase is the only regional, appointment-style marketplace focused solely on the cultural, musical, artistic and culinary heritage of the South. An estimated 300-500 people are expected to attend.

The Louisiana Office of Tourism, in partnership with the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, is a major sponsor and champion of this event. Area hotels, restaurants and attractions met Oct. 13 at Fairfield Place Bed and Breakfast to discuss ways to make this showcase the organization's best and most represented by Shreveport-Bossier partners.

Sponsorship opportunities are available and start as low as \$100. Hotels and attractions also are encouraged to buy a booth and have appointments for direct sales with group tour leaders. If you would like to promote your business to group tour operators, please contact Erica Howard, group tour sales manager, at ehoward@sbctb.org.

Tourist Bureau, DSU Partner to Add New Light Displays to Downtown

Visitors to downtown Shreveport during the 2014 holiday season will be welcomed by approximately 50 new lighted pole decorations. Downtown Shreveport Unlimited and the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau partnered to purchase these new lighted pole decorations. The lighted gateways to downtown will be visible in key, heavily trafficked areas, such as intersections like Spring Street and Crockett Street, Spring Street and Caddo Street, Market Street and Caddo Street and the area near Common Street and Fairfield Avenue.

All of the new lighted pole decorations are fleur-de-lis shaped LED displays. In the center of each fleur-de-lis is an interchangeable centerpiece, which will be a bow during the holiday season and will be changed to a Mardi Gras mask during the Carnival season.

"We've always considered Shreveport to be the hub of the Holiday Trail of Lights," said Downtown Shreveport Unlimited executive director Melanie Bacon. "Coaches, bus tour groups and other travelers will be overnighting in downtown Shreveport throughout the holidays. We saw the lighted gateways as a great way to beautify the main gateways into downtown for the Christmas season and beyond."

The Louisiana Holiday Trail of Lights is a trail consisting of holiday attractions and events that ties together eight cities: Shreveport-Bossier, Minden, Monroe-West Monroe, Natchitoches and Alexandria/Pineville. Shreveport-Bossier has participated in the Louisiana Holiday Trail of Lights for nearly 30 years. For more information on the Louisiana Holiday Trail of Lights, visit www.holidaytrailoflights.com.