

TravelTalk

March-April 2017 **Newsletter**



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Nominations Sought for 2017 P.R.I.D.E. Awards



Stacy Brown, president of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, presents Hollie Fritz of *Travelhost of Northwest Louisiana* with the 2016 P.R.I.D.E. Master Award, the region's highest honor among tourism professionals.

The 2017 P.R.I.D.E. Awards, an annual awards presentation hosted by the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, will be held Thursday, May 11, at Horseshoe Casino and Hotel in Bossier City. A reception will open at 5:30 p.m. with the dinner and awards presentation following at 6 p.m. The acronym P.R.I.D.E. stands for "Proud Residents Involved in Developing our Economy." The awards are held each year during the first full week in May, in conjunction with National Travel and Tourism Week, which will be observed May 7-13, 2017.

The evening will feature an awards program honoring the most outstanding individuals in Shreveport-Bossier's hospitality and tourism industry. Nominations are currently being sought for more than 20 award categories, ranging from Outstanding Attraction Professional to Outstanding Culinary Professional. All hospitality industry professionals from hotels, restaurants and attractions can be nominated. "The P.R.I.D.E. Awards are an excellent opportunity to honor individuals who go above and beyond in their jobs every day," said Stacy Brown, president of the

NOMINATE TODAY!

Do you know an outstanding individual in Shreveport-Bossier's hospitality and tourism industry? If so, nominate today by visiting www.Shreveport-Bossier.org/Pride

Tourist Bureau. "The evening's final award, the P.R.I.D.E. Master Award, is the region's highest honor among tourism professionals and last year the industry recognized Hollie Fritz of *Travelhost of Northwest Louisiana*." There is no charge associated with nominating an individual for awards consideration. To submit nominations, visit www.Shreveport-Bossier.org/Pride. Nominations close at midnight, Sunday, April 9. Tickets will be on sale March 6 - April 26 and cost \$40. For more information, contact Charlie Rice, executive assistant at the Tourist Bureau, at crice@sbctb.org.

Dates to Remember:

- Hospitality Breakfast**
- 3/1** 8 a.m. *Fairfield Manor Bed & Breakfast*
 - 4/5** 8 a.m. *Hilton Garden Inn Shreveport*
- Hotel and Lodging Association Meeting**
- 3/9** Noon *Venue TBD*
 - 4/13** Noon *Venue TBD*
- For more HLA info, contact **Rob Brown** at rbrowntun@caesars.com
- P.R.I.D.E. Awards**
- 5/11** 5:30 p.m. - Reception
6 p.m. - Dinner and awards presentation
Horseshoe Casino & Hotel

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▶▶▶ Your Bureau at Work

- 3/4** 42nd Street Strand Theatre
- 3/4** Artini 601 Spring Event Center
- 3/10** Stevie Nicks CenturyLink Center
- 3/11** Battle of the Gumbo Gladiators Shreveport Festival Plaza
- 3/14-18** 318 Restaurant Week Various Shreveport-Bossier restaurants
- 3/17** St. Patty's Day Block Party Red River District
- 3/18** Louisiana Redbud Festival Vivian Townsquare
- 3/19** Drumline Live Shreveport Municipal Auditorium
- 3/25** ASEANA Spring Festival: Asian Festival Asian Gardens
- 3/31** Big Bad Voodoo Daddy Margaritaville Resort Casino
- 4/1** BLOOM Festival R.W. Norton Art Gallery
- 4/1** Cork: A Red River Wine Event Shreveport Festival Plaza
- 4/1** Sinbad DiamondJacks Casino & Hotel
- 4/7-8** 44th Annual Street Rod Reunion Boomtown Casino & Hotel
- 4/8** Ark-La-Tex Ambassadors BBQ Cook-Off Shreveport Festival Plaza
- 4/14-23** Holiday in Dixie Shreveport Festival Plaza
- 4/20** Brantley Gilbert CenturyLink Center
- 4/22** Chimp Haven Spring Fling Chimp Haven
- 4/22-23** Louisiana Comic Con Hirsch Memorial Coliseum
- 4/24-30** ArtBreak Shreveport Convention Center

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



Follow the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau's Instagram account @SeeShreveportBossier.

The featured photographer in February was **Shannon Palmer** (@Shannon_Palmer_Photos).



Chris Jay

The event attracted more than 500 potential leisure travelers and **Chris Jay**, social media and public relations manager, did several interviews with East Texas media promoting Mardi Gras in Shreveport-Bossier.



David Bradley

Bradley also attended Rendezvous South in Roanoke, Va., Feb. 27 - March 1.



Stacy Brown

also participated in the Louisiana Brand USA International Immersion, Feb. 9.



Suzanne Card

Religious Conference Management Association's Emerge Conference in Chicago, Ill., Feb. 7-9, where they had 10 appointments and numerous tradeshow floor meetings.



Brandy Evans and Danny Schlag represented the Tourist Bureau at the 2017 Shreveport-Bossier American Advertising Awards Gala, Feb. 11.



Danny Schlag

Danny Schlag, graphic design manager, won two Shreveport-Bossier American Advertising Awards - also known as the "ADDYs." The mission of the ADDY competition is to recognize and reward the creative spirit of excellence in the art of advertising. The 2016 Festivals and Annual Events brochure was awarded a Bronze Award for Sales and Marketing Collateral Material - Brochure, and the Be a Fan of Shreveport-Bossier promotion was awarded a Bronze Award for Visual Elements of Advertising - Illustration.



Erica Telsee

Telsee graduated from the Louisiana Tourism Leadership Academy, Jan. 26. Telsee also hosted 450 out-of-town participants at the 11th annual Red River Mardi Gras Bash in Shreveport, Feb. 18. Sponsors of the event were SoBo Promotional Products, Lilah's King Cakes, Tubbs Hardware & Cajun Gifts, Tyler Convention and Visitors Bureau, Multicultural Center of the South and Wyndham Garden Shreveport.

The **Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission** hosted the Louisiana High School Athletic Association State Wrestling Tournament at the CenturyLink Center, Feb. 10-11. The event included more than 12,000 spectators and over 80 participating teams of 700 wrestlers. The **Sports Commission** won the bid to host the Powerboat Nationals on the Red River between Louisiana Boardwalk Outlets in Bossier City and RiverView Park in Shreveport, Sept. 1-3.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Conference Brings 4,000 Delegates to Shreveport-Bossier, March 15-19

Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc., the first Greek-lettered sorority established by African-American college women, will host its 85th annual South Central Regional Conference at the Shreveport Convention Center, March 15-19. The South Central region is the third-largest region in the sorority, with members hailing from Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas and New Mexico. There are 4,000 registered attendees who will also be bringing family and friends along for the trip to Shreveport-Bossier. The conference is utilizing 22 host hotels throughout the area. Many of those hotels are already sold out for the duration of the conference.



The convention and tourism sales department has been working with hospitality and tourism partners to prepare for the "pink and green" takeover that will accompany the Alpha Kappa Alpha 85th annual South Central Regional Conference, March 15-19.

While much of the official business of the conference will take place at Shreveport Convention Center, attractions and restaurants throughout

Shreveport-Bossier are also included in daily outings and activities. There are events for spouses and children that involve outings to local golf courses as

well as Sci-Port Discovery Center, Robinson Film Center and more.

Partners like Downtown Development Authority and Louisiana Boardwalk Outlets are working with the sorority to attract AKAs and their friends by displaying the sorority colors – pink and green – through signage, displays and special offers.

The Shreveport-Bossier Attractions Association will be promoting specials, discounts and other perks. 318 Restaurant Week will be promoting the fixed price lunch and dinner specials from more than 40 local eateries as well as 12 unique, one-night-only dining experiences, March 14-18.

Travel Writers Experience Shreveport-Bossier Mardi Gras

This Mardi Gras season, the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau hosted four travel writers to generate awareness and interest in Shreveport-Bossier's carnival season, particularly in regional drive markets. The four journalists represent *The Austin Chronicle*, *Houston Woman Magazine*, *Empty-nestopia.com* and *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*.

The four day tour, Feb. 24-27, included a ride on the Loving This Life float in the Krewe of Highland Parade XXII, attendance at the Krewe of Gemini Parade XXVIII, tour of Artspace's Creole Wild West Mardi Gras Indians exhibit, tastes of king cake at Lilah's King Cakes, shopping at Enchanted Garden, plus much more.

"Shreveport-Bossier has one of the preeminent Mardi Gras celebrations in Louisiana and we want the media and our regional visitors to come and



The group of travel writers experienced Shreveport-Bossier Mardi Gras firsthand as they rode on a float in the Krewe of Highland Parade XXII.

experience the season because we know once they visit, they will come back often for the fun and rivalry," said Brandy Evans, vice president of communications at the Tourist Bureau.

In addition to the media familiarity tour, the communications department sent out various news releases about all of the Mardi Gras parades and Red River Mardi Gras Bash; produced the 2017 *Mardi Gras Gris Gris Guide to Shreveport-Bossier, Louisiana*; and marketed events on social media, traditional print ads, radio and online advertising.

318 Restaurant Week Returns March 14-18



WHO'S HUNGRY?

318 Restaurant Week will return to Shreveport-Bossier, March 14-18, featuring fixed price lunch for \$10 and dinner specials for \$20 from more than 40 local eateries as well as 12 unique, one-night-only dining experiences.

Visitors and residents alike can meet chefs and dine with fellow "foodies" at multi-course food and drink events ranging from casual patio parties to elaborate fine dining experiences. Space is limited at each of the one-night-only dinners and tickets are available

now. Diners who participate in 318 Restaurant Week are asked to share their experiences on social media using the hashtag #Eat318.

To view the list of the more than 40 participating restaurants, visit www.318RestaurantWeek.com. Like 318 Restaurant Week on Facebook to receive daily updates from participating restaurants, information on giveaways and more. 318 Restaurant Week is sponsored by the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, *The Times* and Waitr.

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Industry Briefs:

Each year, *Louisiana Life* magazine's editors compile a list of Louisianians who stand out above the crowd in industries like community service and culinary to education and medical professions. **Chef Hardette Harris** in Shreveport-Bossier, Louisiana was named one of the eight recipients of the 2017 Louisianians of the Year in the January/February issue.

During its 69th Annual Gala held Tuesday, Jan. 31, at the CenturyLink Center, the Bossier Chamber of Commerce named Margaritaville Resort Casino's Senior Vice President and General Manager **Barry Regula** Business Person of the Year for 2016. Margaritaville is also opening

the new **Riverview Restaurant and Brewhouse**, March 3.

Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser and the Louisiana Office of Tourism announced the official launch of the **#OnlyLouisiana Ambassador Program**. Also known as "the Bayou Krewe," this initiative seeks to showcase Louisiana to the world through crowdsourced social media and asks members to use the official Louisiana hashtag, #OnlyLouisiana, in a concerted effort to share compelling images of unique, Louisiana places and experiences. To sign-up to become a member and receive a free sticker, visit www.louisianatravel.com/social-hub.

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