



St. Louis Attractions Association

August/September 2009 Newsletter

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Karen Hagenow

Summer is in full swing, and if your schedule is anything like mine, it's been a busy one! With so much going on, it's easy to focus on just getting through one day at a time, and not taking on anything new. However, sometimes it's beneficial to take a step back and evaluate new ways to work smarter, and not harder. I've been hesitant about delving into the world of online social media—who has that kind of time!—but I recently joined the FaceBook and Twitter communities and am finding new ways to connect with those interested in my organization. SLAA has joined the virtual world as well; we now have a registered group on the popular business networking site, LinkedIn. We hope it's a good way to keep members connected outside of our bi-monthly meetings. Feel free to join and start a discussion about whatever industry topic is on your mind. Happy networking!

Thanks go to our friends at Eckert's in Belleville for hosting this year's June Board Retreat. Thanks also to the Casa Loma Ballroom and Championship Catering for the great July meeting, and to speaker Fred Firestone for energizing us with his presentation on how to differentiate from the rest.

Finally, a special thanks to the Town Planner and Dan Rosen for their donation of \$500 towards the SLAA Carole Moody Scholarship Fund. We appreciate your generosity!

Cheers,
Karen Hagenow
karen.hagenow@mobot.org

SLAA IS NOW "LINKEDIN"

The Saint Louis Attractions Association has formed a new group on the popular online business networking site, **LinkedIn**. This free service allows SLAA members to submit topics and ideas for personal discussion, post jobs or business news, and more!

If you are already a member of LinkedIn, simply log in, select **Groups** from the left navigation pane, and then click the button to **Find a Group** on the right to search for us: "Saint Louis Attractions Association." If you aren't a member, just visit www.Linkedin.com. Enter your name, email address, and create a password to join and start connecting with your industry colleagues!

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD PRESENTED BY CAROLE MOODY AT JULY SLAA MEETING

The St. Louis Attractions Association was delighted to present a \$1,000 scholarship to a very deserving candidate this year.

Devan Koesterer, our scholarship recipient, is a 2009 graduate of Belleville Township High School East and will be attending Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville in the fall where she is studying business economics and finance. Her goal is to pursue a career in Finance and Economic Development within the tourism industry. Devan is in her third year of working as a Gift Shop Sales Associate with Cahokia Mounds. She says that providing visitors with a great experience is the best part of her job. Congratulations Devan!

Since 1991, 22 students interested in the tourism/hospitality industry have benefited from over \$20,000 in scholarship funds from the St. Louis Attractions Association Scholarship Program. Each year, the Association holds a Silent Auction to raise money to build the scholarship fund.



Carole Moody and Devan Koesterer

ALLIED TRADESHOW/JULY MEETING RECAP

Thank you to our speaker Fred Firestone, Pat Brannon of the Casa Loma Ballroom and Championship Catering. Thanks to the St. Louis Convention and Visitor's Commission, Madden Media, Gifts, and Build A Bear Workshop for donating to the SLAA trip raffle for the July meeting. The trip raffle raised \$110. Vince Manzer of Travelers TV Network of St. Louis won the trip raffle. The 50/50 raffle raised \$44 and was won by Gail Watkins of Barnes-Jewish Hospital.



Fred Firestone with participant at July meeting



Above & Right: Allied Tradeshow Booths

PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE UPDATE

Missouri Legislative Wrap-Up

As those attending the March meeting heard, tourism funding is always at risk during tough economic times. This past and current fiscal year's funding are no exception. Many Legislators just don't understand that investing in tourism adds to the general revenue budget. The state receives \$2.47 in state tax revenues from every \$1 invested in the Division of Tourism. The SLAA Public Affairs Committee is staying informed about this topic and asks that each member become active in contacting their legislatures regularly. Funding is always in jeopardy, and as voters and/or tax-paying employees our voices do make a difference.

As required, the Missouri Legislature has approved a balanced budget for fiscal year 2010. While Governor Jay Nixon did recommend full funding for the Division of Tourism at \$23.7 million, final funding was approved by all government branches at \$20 million based on a 4% increase in revenue. Currently, revenues are running at a 6% deficit. The news could be much worse- at one time there was talk of cutting the budget by half.

The Division has found creative ways to cut spending without cutting the Cooperative Marketing Program. This is good news for all of us since the St. Louis CVC does a great job of capitalizing on this program, and always maximizes the marketing dollars available from the Division.

The Public Affairs Committee will continue to update everyone about upcoming funding. We will all have challenges to meet between now and the 2011 legislative year. Missouri does impose term limits and there will be 110 new legislators who will again need to be educated on the importance of tourism to the state and St. Louis. Seems like a long way off, but approaching candidates before election is never too early, no matter what election year we are in.

Contact information for all state representatives and state senators can be found at www.moga.mo.gov. Sample letters are available from the members of the Public Affairs Committee.

HOSPITALITY HELPING HANDS

Thank you SLAA Members for your generous donation of your time and donated items to the Hospitality Helping Hands Project.

HHH hosted a lively trivia night that raised funds to buy school supplies. The school supplies and back packs were assembled and distributed to Neighborhood Houses charity. This entire Community Service Project was a success and resulted in over 260 back packs filled with school supplies. On July 31st the backpacks were disbursed to the children at their Skate Party and now they are ready for the start of a new school year.

Thank you to all of our members who attended the trivia night and supported the HHH project. The St.

Louis Attraction Association's silent auction gift basket donated to the trivia night was a crowd pleaser. The basket was overflowing with admission tickets, gift certificates and other items from Sheraton Westport Hotel, Harrah's, Drury Hotels, Gateway Arch, Missouri Botanical Garden, The Tourism Bureau Southwestern Illinois, West Port Playhouse, Missouri History Museum Trailnet, Radio Disney, St. Louis Convention & Visitors Commission, Maryland Heights Convention & Visitors Bureau, and GIFTS.

Thank you to all of you, this entire project was a true tribute to the hospitality industry's professionalism and generosity.

DIVISION OF TOURISM UPDATES

Please note a couple updated contacts at the Missouri Division of Tourism: Stephen Foutes, Travel Guide Editor, (573) 751-3208 or Stephen.Foutes@ded.

mo.gov; Sarah Luebbert, Communications Director, (573) 522-5501 or Sarah.Luebbert@ded.mo.gov.

FEATURED ATTRACTION

Onesto Pizza & Trattoria

Long time SLAA members, Michele and Vito Racanelli, opened Onesto Pizza & Trattoria (at 5401 Finkman) last year in the historic South City neighborhood called SOHA. Michele and Vito originally joined SLAA when they owned Big V's Burger Joint in University City, then continued with V. Catering and Events.



Chef Vito Racanelli is serious about food. A testament to the values of his food comes from his extended family and is written in his credo; “there is nothing more honest than food.” He twists up his family’s traditions a bit, but his overall passion is to cook with seasonal, local, fresh ingredients and make sure to have fun as well!

It has always been his philosophy that cooking with the freshest ingredients makes the best food. This is why Onesto Pizza & Trattoria supports local farmers, using only organically or locally grown fruits and vegetables. Only antibiotic and hormone free proteins and seafood are used at Onesto. Vito believes that in

cooking, as with many other industries, a restaurant must also be aware of our planet’s future. Vito recycles reuses and reduces at Onesto and will not cook with any endangered seafood or meats. Chef Vito truly believes the world can be a better place one meal at a time.

Chef Vito, a graduate of the Johnson & Whales University College of Culinary Arts, has been cooking for almost 20 years. Vito’s experiences range from small intimate cafes to Five Star/Diamond restaurants in NYC. He serves on the Advisory Board of L’Ecole Culinaire and has guided numerous young chefs onto many exciting jobs!



Onesto Pizza & Trattoria, has received many awards in its first year including Top Ten New Restaurants in 2008, The Post-Dispatch, Best Place to Wait for a Table – RFT, Best Cozy Italian Restaurant – ALIVE Magazine, 3rd Place – Best Chef in St. Louis – Sauce Magazine 2009. Chef Vito won First Place in the 2008 Taste of St. Louis Culinary Competition.

For more information call (314) 802-8883, or write to Onesta Pizza & Trattoria, 5401 Finkman, St. Louis, MO 63109. E-mail: Michele@onestopizza.com, and Web page: www.onestopizza.com.



Hosted by:



SAINT LOUIS ATTRACTIONS ASSOCIATION

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2009

11:00 A.M - 1:00 P.M.

Get Moving!

Don't miss the boat on this informational program including updates on multiple modes of transportation, and how visitors to your attraction and employees can get around town. The program will include speakers from Metro, the Missouri Department of Transportation, Amtrak, the RCGA, and Lambert-St. Louis International Airport. You won't want to miss it!

Date: Wednesday, September 16, 2009
Location: Gateway Arch Riverboats
Pricing: \$25.00 Members, \$30.00 Non-Members & Walk-Ins

Policies:

- Please make reservations by Noon, Friday, September 11, 2009.
Payment for SLAA members is required in advance or at the door. Non-members must pay in advance at the time of reservation.
Non-paid no shows and non-paid attendees will be invoiced for the full registration fee.

Schedule:

11:00 a.m. Registration & Networking
11:45 a.m. Luncheon
12:00 p.m. Program
1:00 p.m. SLAA Announcements & Conclusion

Please Note: The Riverboat will be leaving the dock & cruising the river at 11:45 a.m. It will return to the dock at 1:00 p.m.

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

I will be paying: ___At the door ___By Credit Card ___By Check

Credit Card #: _____

Expiration Date: _____ 3-Digit Security Code (on back of card): _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

___ Season Pass Holder ___ Vegetarian Lunch
___ Total Amount Included with Registration

To register:

Online: www.stlattractions.org e-mail: SLAA@QABS.COM
Fax: (314) 845-1891 Phone: (314) 416-2233
Mail: SLAA, 4728 Hedgemont Drive, St. Louis, MO 63128

Directions:

From Illinois: Take I-64/55/70 West across the Poplar Street Bridge. Take the Memorial Dr./Arch Riverfront/Convention Center Exit Only (right lane). The riverfront is accessible by traveling past the Arch (right lane) and taking the first right on Washington Ave.

From I-70: Take I-70 East to the Memorial Dr.-Downtown Exit (250B). Turn left on Chestnut. Turn left on Memorial Dr. Stay in the right lane and turn right on Washington Ave.

From I-55: Take I-55/44 North (I-44E merges with I-55N) take the Downtown Exit (209A), which is the 2nd right-hand lane, then exit at Memorial Dr. (251C). Be careful - far right lane goes to Illinois. Continue straight and you will be on Memorial Dr. The riverfront is accessible by traveling past the Arch (right lane) and taking the first right on Washington Ave.

From I-64: Take I-64/US-40 East to Sixth St. exit, 40B (last MO exit). Continue straight off of the exit ramp. Turn left onto Chouteau Ave. Turn left onto 4th St. and travel North to Washington Ave. Turn right on Washington Ave.

Looking for a route that avoids the highway construction and ramp closures?

Visit http://dist6.modot.mo.gov/mapmytrip/

This website will map your trip taking into account highway and ramp closures in the St. Louis city and county area.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2009-2010

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Tami Goldman, Missouri History Museum

ST. LOUIS UPDATE

*Compiled by Jennifer Hollenkamp, St. Louis Convention & Visitors Commission,
jhollenkamp@explorestlouis.org*

The Rivalry Resumes

The State Farm Arch Rivalry football series featuring the Illinois Fighting Illini vs. the Missouri Tigers returns to the Edward Jones Dome on Saturday, September 5, 2009. While individual tickets may be hard to come by, a limited number of "Rivals Club" packages remain. Packages feature great seats, an exclusive pregame buffet in the Rams Club, complimentary parking, and more. A wide variety of events surrounding the game will be taking place all weekend long. The Arch Rivalry Football Series is produced by the St. Louis Convention & Visitors Commission and the St. Louis Sports Commission.

Holiday Magic Tradeshaw

Holiday Magic, the CVC's brand new holiday show, will debut December 4-6 at America's Center, just in time for holiday shopping for locals and visitors alike. There will be holiday décor and gift vendors, a dazzling light show, full-scale carnival, live entertainment, and much more. We invite you be part of this inaugural season to be a sponsor, exhibitor or possibly, a media partner. Check out the website for more information

at www.stlholidaymagic.com. For more detailed information, contact Cris Gallagher, Tradeshaw Development Manager, at (314) 992-0631 or cgallagher@explorestlouis.com.

CVC Training Programs

The CVC is offering two programs that can help you help your employees create a positive guest experience. **St. Lou is... Me** focuses on employees becoming St. Louis ambassadors. **St. Lou is... Hospitality** focuses on customer service for frontline employees. Find more detailed class descriptions, registration information and calendar on our website at www.explorestlouis.com/cvc/membership.asp. Click on the link on the left side of the page marked "Training & Development." For more information, please contact Lorraine Gustavis at 314-992-0618 or lgustavis@explorestlouis.com.

Mark Your Calendar!

CVC Annual Meeting & Hospitality Hero Awards
America's Center
Thursday, September 17, 2009
11:30am – 1:30pm

ILLINOIS UPDATE

*Compiled by Pat White, Tourism Bureau of Southwestern Illinois,
pwhite@thetourismbureau.org*

The World Shooting & Recreational Complex will welcome nearly 6,000 trapshooters for the Amateur Trapshooting Association's Grand American tournament from August 5-15. The Grand attracts nearly 40,000 participants, vendors and spectators from all 50 states and several foreign countries during the ten day run. The WSRC is the largest facility of its

kind in the United States with a three and a half mile shooting line, the Main Events building, permanent vendor space and 1,000 campsites with hookups for RVs and campers. Even if you aren't familiar with the sport, it's worth while to come out and watch the action. For more information, call the Tourism Bureau Southwestern Illinois at 800-442-1488.

ST. CHARLES UPDATE

*Compiled by Pam Schulz, Greater St. Charles Convention & Visitors Bureau,
gscvb@historicstcharles.com*

Saint Charles received the mention for the entire state of Missouri in the USA Today (May 22 edition). This was exciting news for the Convention & Visitors Bureau & the City of St. Charles that we were chosen to represent the State of Missouri.

Here's the article: FREE SUMMER FUN -- Even in hard times, everyone deserves fun in the sun. To kick off the summer travel season, USA Today's Travel Staff tracked down free events and attractions in every state. MISSOURI Show me some history! The brick Main Street of St. Charles, outside St. Louis, comes alive with weekend entertainment celebrating the city's 200th anniversary. That's just one of 200 events this year in the first Missouri state capital. You can even borrow an iPod from the tourism center and take a free audio / video tour, 800-366-2427; www.historicstcharles.com.

Then the Travel Section of the New York Times (May 31 edition) featured St. Charles, the Katy Trail & the scenic town of Defiance and Augusta in their article *Rediscovering America – One Summer, 14 Weekends*. Only 14 locations in America were chosen & St. Charles was one of them.

Historic Main Street & Frontier Park will be filled with crafts, food and entertainment during our largest festival of the year, **Festival of the Little Hills**, August 21-23. During September, we have several free events, here are just a few: **Missouri River Irish Fest, Mosaics-Festival for the Arts and Oktoberfest**. The City of St. Charles is gearing up for their week long Bicentennial activities during October 9-13. **Lewis & Clark Marathon and Half Marathon** event sponsored by Fleet Feet will take place on September 13 in Frontier Park. This event will have over 5,600 participants. For a complete listing of events, log-on to www.historicstcharles.com.

St. Charles will be the host city for the **Missouri State HOG (Harley Davidson) Rally & Convention** on September 11 & 12. The rally and field events will take place at the Saint Charles Convention Center. The public is invited to come see the bikes displayed on the parking lots, watch the parade the evening of September 12, and join in the festivities during the Main Street party with live music following the parade. For further details log-on to: www.mostatehogrally.com.

Area updates are compiled by liaisons to the SLAA Board. If you have information to include, please contact your representative directly via e-mail.