



Travel Talk - Your Member News

December 2015

IN THIS ISSUE

Dear Member,

It's that time of year again, when we're winding down another year and busily getting ready for the holidays and preparing for the new year ahead.

Like most of you, I'm already in the process of looking to 2016 - preparing budgets, marketing plans and working with staff in finalizing goals and objectives.

As I plan for the future, I'm proud to say that Destination Gettysburg doesn't have to look back too far to see success. In fact, we're seeing it right now.

This year, lodging in Adams County, Pa. is set to exceed 2013 numbers in occupancy rate, average daily room rate, and overall demand.

While these numbers are impressive, we must always look ahead and be prepared for the opportunities and challenges that we'll face in the coming year.

Destination Gettysburg is excited to host its first-ever "Build, Inspire, Innovate" Summit on Feb. 11, 2016. This one-day summit will provide a great opportunity for you and your staff to learn about a variety of marketing-related topics to grow your business. Click [here](#) for more information.

Thank you for your support this past year and may you have a wonderful holiday and a prosperous New Year!

Sincerely,

Norris Flowers
President

[Top Headlines](#)

[Tourism Summit 2016](#)

[Marketing Updates](#)

[Advertising Opportunities](#)

[Member News](#)

[Group Tour News](#)

[Meetings Market News](#)

[Media Relations](#)

[Visitor Information
Services](#)

Top Headlines

Destination Gettysburg kicks off downtown beautification effort

Destination Gettysburg has launched a new initiative to beautify empty storefronts and, in turn, attract new businesses to fill open spaces in the downtown area.

The first storefront, the former PNC Bank on York Street, was lined with window graphics last month, bringing attention to the region's holiday celebration as well as Destination Gettysburg's social media channels where visitors can engage with a variety of experiences throughout Gettysburg and Adams County.



Destination Gettysburg will use these window graphics - installed by Graphcom - as a way to encourage visitors to Downtown Gettysburg to get out and about in Adams County and explore a variety of places, or possible return visits.

The staff at Destination Gettysburg is currently exploring, with the help of real estate companies, other storefronts in the downtown area. The organization has worked hand-in-hand with the Borough of Gettysburg to make this initiative come to fruition this fall.

New Passport app makes parking easier in Gettysburg

The parking meters in Gettysburg now feature Passport technology, allowing motorists to park at meters using a mobile app on their phone or tablet. More money can also be added to meters remotely, allowing guests to dine, shop or visit attractions and add more money to their parking meter. Visitors can still pay with change, if they like, however.



Motorists should simply download the Passport app at <https://gopassport.com/>, and set up your account.

Also, as a business owner, you can set up a variety of parking validation programs, discounts and promotions for your customers as an incentive for doing business with you. Click [here](#) for more information.

Happy 90th Birthday to Andy Larson!



Andy Larson, one of the patriarchs of the Destination Gettysburg organization, turned 90 years old on Dec. 1.

As owner of Larson's Motel, Andy - along with several business owners in the early 1950s - was instrumental in the creation and development of the Gettysburg Travel Council. Watch Andy, and others, talk about Destination Gettysburg's early years by clicking [here](#).

On behalf of the Adams County tourism industry, we wish Andy well and congratulations!

Tell us what's new in 2016?

We want to share with travelers, journalists and tour operators what is new in Adams County, Pa. If you are offering new programs, new packages, new menu items or experiences you've never offered visitors, please let us know. We include such information in newsletters, press releases and other efforts ... and people are always asking.

Email any ideas to Stacey Fox, Vice President of Sales and Marketing, at stacey@destinationgettysburg.com.

Gettysburg C.A.R.E.S. seeks contributions, volunteers

The Gettysburg C.A.R.E.S. organization works with area churches to provide shelter to individuals and families. Last year, C.A.R.E.S. assisted 84 people, 31 of which were under the age of 12, through April.

The organization is reaching out to the community for the contribution of non-perishable food as well as donations and cleaning supplies. Click [here](#) for a letter from C.A.R.E.S. to show how you can help this holiday season and beyond.

'Build, Inspire, Innovate' Summit 2016

Registration now open for Summit

Today, business owners are faced with an abundance of marketing tools to promote their products and services, but figuring out which tools are best, and as importantly, carving out the time to use these tools are among the most difficult challenges for businesses.

Locally, in Adams County, businesses ranging from stores to restaurants to small inns, are facing these issues with limited resources - staff, time and money - to invest in new marketing methods. Often these business owners are faced with the decision to do such tasks as cleaning, cooking and helping customers to posting on social media, writing press releases and determining their upcoming advertising.



Destination Gettysburg is hosting a one-day summit, "Build, Inspire, Innovate" on Feb. 11, 2016, as a way to confront these issues head-on and provide solutions to businesses and organizations to best market their businesses, looking at the impression they have on customers and be relevant in today's business world, among other topics.

All local businesses have the opportunity to attend this first-ever summit in Adams County, featuring an impressive line-up of keynote speakers, presenters and panelists for business owners and their employees throughout the region. All sessions are geared toward helping small business owners and their employees understand how to best use their resources in today's business climate.

The keynote speaker for "Build, Inspire, Innovate" is Gerry O'Brien, a marketing speaker and author who focuses on growth of companies of all sizes from small businesses to billion-dollar brands.



Gerry O'Brien

O'Brien built his career growing big brands, including Procter & Gamble, Crisco, Tide, Mr. Clean, Spic & Span, Coors Brewing Co., Quiznos and Red Robin Gourmet Burgers.

O'Brien will deliver two keynote addresses at the summit: "What Big Brands Know" - focusing on billion-dollar strategies that small businesses can use to help attract customers and turn them into passionate, loyal fans of those businesses by using four critical questions; and "Navigating Change and Generational Differences" - highlighting ways to leverage change and introduce critical business strategies to motivate millennial employees and attract millennial customers.

Topics for sessions include social media, blogging, building marketing plans, making first impressions with customers, health and wellness in the workplace and understanding customers, in addition to a panel of regional journalists to address concerns and questions among business owners about getting their story told through the media.

A full agenda, as well as speaker biographies and registration information is available at www.gettysburgtourismworks.com. More information is also available by calling (717) 334-6274.

Marketing Updates

A look at Destination Gettysburg's recent marketing efforts

Our October marketing efforts included ads in Good Housekeeping, Recreation News and GolfStyles Magazine in addition to our ongoing digital campaign. The monthly consumer newsletter was distributed the first week of October to nearly 80,000 opt-in subscribers.

These efforts resulted in increased traffic to the website, up 8% to 48,439 users that produced 61,815 sessions and 242,016 page views in October.

During October, we hosted a culinary media FAM tour for journalists from PA Meetings + Events, UncoveringPA.com, Susquehanna Style, AAA World and Eastern Home & Travel. Media efforts throughout the month resulted in 111 story placements including coverage on TheCultureTrip.com, Main Line Today, the Family Travel blog, Central Penn Business Journal and About.com. Social Media efforts on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Pinterest continue to drive increased engagement with the destination and our #MyGettysburg campaign. We also posted three new blogs helping to tell the story of the destination. For a full report, click [here](#).



November efforts continued digital and print advertising and started the process of promoting the holidays.

December looks forward to additional digital advertising, a consumer newsletter, media pitching and social media efforts to promote overall travel to Gettysburg during the holidays and over 40 events.



Review your listing in the 2016 Travel Planner, starting today

The proof of the 2016 Travel Planner, formerly the Gettysburg Official Visitor Guide, will be in the office today, Dec. 4, 7 and 8 for review.

We ask that all members stop by to look at their free listings and their paid advertising in the guide. This will be the last opportunity to make edits to your free listing or your paid ad.

Questions regarding the 2016 Travel Planner should be directed to Stacey Fox at stacey@destinationgettysburg.com.

Advertising Opportunities

AAA World announces ad co-op opportunities for 2016

Destination Gettysburg and AAA World Magazine have released two co-op advertising opportunities for 2016.

AAA World distributes its print magazine to more than 695,000 households in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, DC. Its digital advertising reaches all Mid-Atlantic Regions. Ad rates run between \$600 and \$1,200 for the July/August issue and September/October issue.

For more information, along with ad deadlines, click [here](#).

Member News

Welcome the newest member of Destination Gettysburg:

Civil War Tails - Gettysburg, Pa.

Ruth Brown

info@civilwartails.com

www.civilwartails.com

Author looking to work with local businesses

Author Mary Morgan is seeking local businesses to sell her latest book, "Spies in Disguise at Gettysburg." The book - part mystery, part geography and mystery - is targeted toward pre-teen children, ages 7-11. To date, the book has sold more than 1,200 copies in schools, online and in bookstores.

For more information, click [here](#).

Group Tour News

Group Tour Meeting Notes

Destination Gettysburg held a Group Tour Meeting for all members who market to the group tour/motor coach markets on Nov. 20. We discussed our 2016 Group Tour Marketing Plans, recent trade shows and updated information on Pennsylvania Bus Association's Annual Meeting being held in Gettysburg, June 20-23, 2016. Click [here](#) for notes and additional information on the meeting.

Please contact Nicole Absher, Group Sales Manager, at nicole@destinationgettysburg.com if you have further questions.

New Group Tour opportunities announced for 2016

Promote your business to the group tour market with Destination Gettysburg in 2016. Opportunities include sharing a booth at various group leader tradeshow, participating in a "Work-To-Play," or hitting the road with us during one of our sales missions. Click [here](#) for more information on each opportunity in 2016.

Contact [Nicole Absher](#), Group Sales Manager, to participate or with questions.

Registration now open for PBA's 'Neighborhood Night!'

Plans are underway for the 2016 Annual Meeting of the PA Bus Association, which will be hosted at the Gateway Gettysburg complex.

Destination Gettysburg members have multiple opportunities to participate during this event including FAMs, registering as an attendee for the full conference, sponsorships and more.

Registration is officially open for our Neighborhood Night event, click [here](#) for additional information.

Please contact [Jenny McConnell](#), Director of Sales, with questions pertaining to PBA 2016.

Meetings Market News

New member marketing opportunities announced for 2016

Destination Gettysburg is offering multiple opportunities for our members in 2016, including co-op advertising and a booth-share at the 2016 PASAE Summit and Expo. For additional information, please click [here](#).

Meetings Market Meeting Notes

On Nov. 11, Destination Gettysburg updated its membership on meetings market promotional efforts. Click [here](#) for notes from the meeting. Contact [Jenny McConnell](#), Director of Sales, if you have any questions on the topics covered.

Meeting planner leads now available

The following leads are available for download through the member portal:

- 2015 CONNECT Marketplace - Aug. 27-30 in Pittsburgh, Pa. Association planner appointments
- 2015 "Meet PA" Philadelphia Reception - Oct. 27 with Philadelphia-based meeting planners

If you have questions about meeting planner leads, contact Jenny McConnell, Director of Sales, at jenny@destinationgettysburg.com or (717) 338-1053.

Media Relations News

'Buffalo News' features Gettysburg's holiday season

The Buffalo News, Western New York's leading daily newspaper, featured Gettysburg, Pa.'s holiday season in its Sunday travel section on Nov. 29. The article was made possible through connection built between Destination Gettysburg and the author, Emeri Krawczyk, who wrote:

"Already a top tourist destination, it is no wonder the quaint town also has become a holiday destination. The history, the holiday décor, the shops, the food and overall charm come together to create a perfect getaway."

The Buffalo News has a print circulation of 138,000 and 628,000 unique visitors a month to its website.

The article highlighted the upcoming performance of "A Christmas Carol" at the Majestic Theater, as well as a variety of holiday events and dining. The article came as a result of a media pitch distributed by Destination Gettysburg in late October. For the full article, click [here](#).

Be part of Destination Gettysburg's 'Winter Getaways' pitch

This month and into January, Destination Gettysburg will pitch "Winter Getaways" to travel media throughout the Mid-Atlantic.

Earlier this year, Destination Gettysburg laid the foundation to increased winter visitation and plans to build upon that in 2016. Several articles were placed and two travel journalists were hosted in the winter months with the focus on winter getaways. [Here](#) is one of those articles.

We'll certainly be focusing on outdoor recreation at Liberty Mountain Resort, but we'll also include experiences that include lodging and dining and other activities - post-holidays (this pitch will not include holiday information or events).

This pitch will target visitation between Jan. 1 and March 31st, and we are seeking events, experiences and your ideas. Culinary ideas, and other unique experiences are especially needed.

If you have events or ideas you'd like to be considered for the media pitch, please send it before Dec. 15 to Carl Whitehill, Director of Communications, at carl@destinationgettysburg.com.



Visitor Information Services

Are your guests looking for holiday meals, restaurant openings?

Dining options for visitors staying in the area over the holidays are available on the online event calendar. Simply click on the date (Dec. 24, 25, 31 and/or Jan. 1) for a listing of restaurants that are open on each of the respective holidays.

Destination Gettysburg collects visitor feedback

The visitor information staff, through phone calls prior to visits, as well as visitor interaction during visits, collects valuable information that Destination Gettysburg staff believes can help its members and their understanding of what visitors are looking for.

Among recent analysis:

- Visitors are interested in holiday events and meals, particularly on Christmas Day and New Year's Day
- Visitors also continue to look for package offerings for tours, museums and accommodations
- Interest in planning 2016 visits and compiling information

Have more staff who needs to be in the know? Send me a list of names and email addresses and we will add them to our communication list. Carl Whitehill - carl@destinationgettysburg.com

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