



Windy City will host 2004 convention



Numbers could top last year's record Pursuit of top prizes produces many entries

With the Nov. 1 deadline for submitting entries in the NATJA 2004 awards competition fast approaching, executive director Elizabeth Barnes predicts the number of entries will exceed the record 233 submitted last year.

The current contest includes three grand prizes for the first time, plus an additional 31 first prizes. Judges are empowered to award multiple awards in any category but do not have to award prizes in every category. The complete list of categories appeared in the last Wayfarer and is also posted at www.natja.org.

To be eligible for any of the three grand prizes and 31 first prizes, entries received by the California office must be postmarked by Nov. 1.

The nine-day, eight-night grand prize provided by Montana Rockies Rail Tours is the longest in the 11-year history of the NATJA competition, while the Four Seasons Maldives grand prize is the first to include a cruise. The third grand prize, donated by the City of Chicago, is the only one in this year's list that also includes airline tickets.

Most first prizes are four-day, three-night stays for two people sharing luxury accommodations anytime during calendar year 2004, subject to availability and local house rules (i.e. some properties prohibit children under age 12). Trips may not be taken by non-journalists.

The 33 categories include books, articles written for the Internet, press kits, photography, and awards for best travel magazine and newspaper travel section. The complete list, which is also at www.natja.org, appeared in the centerfold of The Wayfarer's last issue.

After winners are notified Dec. 1, they will receive ballots to list their Top 10 prize preferences. Judges will then assign prizes, giving priority to paid NATJA members and multiple winners. Prizes will be distributed before year's end.

Grand prize sponsors:

Montana Rockies Rail Tours (Wyoming Trails, an eight-night prize worth \$4300)

Four Seasons Maldives (Pacific Paradise, a 7-night prize that combines a four-night cruise with a three-night stay for two in beach bungalow accommodations)

Chicago (Windy City Windfall, a \$4000 package that features a four-night stay in the Fairmont Chicago, several dinners, and roundtrip tickets on Spirit Airlines)

First prize sponsors (see details in last Wayfarer or online):

Charles Hotel, Cambridge, MA

Colony Beach & Tennis Resort, Longboat Key, FL

Coyaba Beach Resort & Club, Montego Bay, Jamaica

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Second annual meeting starts Wed. May 12

Chicago has won a spirited bidding war to host the 2004 NATJA convention.

The Windy City, which also provided one of three Grand Prizes in the group's current travel journalism awards competition, prevailed primarily because of its willingness to provide enough sponsors to keep registration costs low.

Although those fees have yet to be determined, dates for the three-night convention are set: it will start Wednesday, May 12 and end Saturday, May 15, when a series of area FAM tours will begin.

The timing of the event, to begin the week after Mother's Day, matches the slate of the first convention, held in Newport, RI this past spring.

According to executive director Elizabeth Barnes, who was deluged with applications after sending proposals to nearly 1500 city and state tourism offices, several cities sought the 2004 meeting but dozens applied. The city of Santa Fe and the state of New Mexico made such strong presentations that they appear to be the early front-runner for a future convention site.

After receiving input from Evan Smith, vice president of the Newport Convention and Visitors Bureau, NATJA considered such factors as hotel and convention facilities, area attractions, airport accessibility, and probable weather conditions before making its decision.

Chicago was chosen because it has a myriad of museums and attractions, plus an inner-city rail network that makes it easy to get around. The fact that both its baseball teams were contenders this year also makes it attractive, at least to president Dan Schlossberg and others who share his enthusiasm for the game.

Both Schlossberg and Barnes will make at least one site inspection to the convention site to meet host hoteliers and sponsors.

The basic convention format will remain similar to last year's, with meetings and seminars in the morning, one travel marketplace, sightseeing in the afternoons, and three diverse dinner events. Evan Smith has already agreed to be one of the speakers at the 2004 event, with others to be selected in the new feature.

Watch for additional information in The Wayfarer and www.natja.org.

Hotel awake, give guests good night's sleep

THE PREZ BOX

Dan Schlossberg

It took long enough: hotels are finally realizing their top priority in ensuring that guests get a good night's rest. Those taking steps to provide it deserve the support of journalists who write about travel.

The Ritz-Carlton of Key Biscayne, FL is a case in point. It recently introduced a "menu" of 12 pillows, including one with an adjustable internal hot-and-cold pack to treat neck pain.



Dan Schlossberg

Members of the Wyndham guest-recognition program receive cooling eye-pads in the shape of cucumber slices while its ByRequest members can customize a room by listing preferences, including extra pillows.

Chicago's Hotel Burnham, part of the Kimpton boutique group, has a pillow library that allows it to compete for sleep-conscious customers with fellow Windy City properties like the Ritz-Carlton (complimentary ear plugs, masks, and cotton blankets upon request) and the Four Seasons (free Jet Lag Tea, served upon check-in, is an herbal mix designed to help the frazzled traveler unwind).

W hotel chain patrons can not only purchase flavored waters and energy bars from the minibar but \$9 cooling eye gels, discs shaped like silver dollars that contain aromatic oils to cool the area around the eye.

Even B&Bs are getting into the act. The Abigail Stoneman Inn of Newport, RI has only five rooms but a plethora of options for pillows, bath soaps, and drinking water (we've never seen another inn with a water bar) as well as private Jacuzzis guaranteed to relax the most rattled guest.

The industry trend toward improving sleeping conditions started in 1996, when Hilton introduced Sleep Tight

rooms stocked with sound machines, meditation CDs, black-out curtains, eye masks, and ear plugs. Three years later, Starwood introduced its Heavenly Bed. It proved so popular that the hotel chain now sells a couple of dozen per week, even though the price for a king is \$1,300. Although Sleep Tight was discontinued last year, the concept is still sound.

Researchers continue to insist that the average American needs at least eight hours of sleep, while hotels realize that promoting sound sleeping conditions is a good way to boost business.

Industry information indicates pro-sleep programs have boosted nationwide revenues 5 per cent this year alone.

"Sleeping on the road is probably one of the biggest reasons people don't enjoy traveling," says Charlotte St. Martin, a Loews Hotel marketing executive. Realizing that, her firm has introduced an in-room menu of air purifiers, chenille throws, and machines that make waves – or at least the sound of waves.

Personally speaking, the perfect hotel room is pitch-black and sound-proofed, with no adjoining doors to other rooms or proximity to elevators, stairwells, ice or vending machines, or parking lots. Rooms facing highways, even if high up in the building, are often too noisy as well.

And any room where the bed is near the door to the corridor is certain to be a problem, especially when neighbors start slamming doors at O'Dark Hundred.

From this perspective, San Francisco's Clift Hotel has the right idea: lullabies performed by a string quartet and turndown service that features votive candles, chocolate-chip

cookies, and a bottle of wine. No wonder Tony Bennett left his heart there; he got a good night's sleep.

Fresh air in Texas: despite the Bush Administration's outspoken opposition to restrictions on public smoking, the President's old stomping grounds have gone smokefree. Smoking is not only banned in Austin, the state capital, but individual violators face \$2,000 fines (establishments risk losing their licenses).

Austin isn't alone: Boston, Los Angeles, and New York are among the many municipalities that have all but eliminated public smoking, while a half-dozen states, including New York and California, have followed suit.

Dual loyalty? Since more than 24 NATJA members also belong to the older and larger Society of American Travel Writers (SATW), they must glean benefits from both groups. No one at NATJA has ever discouraged such duality or denigrated SATW in any way, yet occasional contributors to the SATW Forum continue to delight in throwing rocks, insults, and other unwarranted verbal debris in our direction, attacking both the group and its leadership. After a mid-September assault, site keeper Marsh Whitfield was kind enough to write an apology to the two-dozen journalists who belong to both groups. His support is much appreciated, as mentioned in an e-mail he received immediately after the latest incident. Maybe, just maybe, the established guys realize the new kids on the block are in the big leagues too.

Division of labor: Readers who look carefully will spot two different addresses for NATJA in The Wayfarer. That's because the president continues to live in Northern New Jersey, where the group was founded, while the executive director and parent company, added less than two years ago, are based in California. The president runs all aspects of the awards competitions, from recruiting sponsors to receiving and distributing prizes, presides over group meetings, and writes and designs this newsletter. All administrative functions, including membership liaison, financial matters, convention planning, and the publishing and distribution of The Wayfarer, are handled from California. The president, strictly a volunteer, and the executive director, a

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Voting for 5-star Awards ends in November Members to honor shining stars of travel industry

The world's best travel providers, from hoteliers to publicists, CVBs, and transportation companies, will be rewarded for jobs well done in NATJA's annual 5-Star Awards voting.

Following a vote by members in good standing, winners will receive handsome, limited-edition certificates suitable for framing, permission to use the highly-respected NATJA name in advertising and promotional literature, and publicity in The Wayfarer and the website, www.natja.org.

A total of 19 awards will be made, the same number as last year. Members may vote by e-mail, snail mail, or fax, utilizing the coupon at right. Deadline for responses is Monday, November 1st, the same deadline the organization has set for receipt of entries in its annual travel journalism awards competition.

Winners of both contests will be announced in the winter issue of The Wayfarer, published in December, and on the NATJA website.

The complete list of 2002 winners (*indicates repeaters): Best domestic airline, JetBlue*; Best foreign airline, Virgin Atlantic*; Best cruise line or ship, Royal Clipper; Best railroad, Montana Rockies Rail Tours; Best car rental firm, Hertz; Best individual hotel, The Phoenician; Best hotel chain, Four Seasons*; Best inn or B&B, The Inn at Perry Cabin; Best domestic destination, Maui; Best international destination, Tahiti; Best restaurant, 15th Street Fisheries*; Best tour operator, Shebby Lee Tours; Most hospitable city, Baltimore; Most media-friendly CVB, Philadelphia; Most media-friendly state tourism office, Massachusetts; Best friend to travel writers, Kelly Earnest; Best travel PR firm, Ed Stone & Associates; Best attraction, San Francisco cable cars; Best new attraction, Acadia Railway.

clip and send

Send to: NATJA 5-Star Awards, 10 Ballard Place, Fair Lawn, NJ 07410-3601 (E.mail dan@natja.org or Fax 201-791-3349).

Best domestic airline: _____

Best foreign airline: _____

Best cruise line or ship: _____

Best rail tour company: _____

Best car rental firm: _____

Best individual hotel: _____

Best hotel chain: _____

Best inn or B&B: _____

Best domestic destination: _____

Best international destination: _____

Best tour operator: _____

Most hospitable city: _____

Most media-friendly CVB: _____

Most media-friendly state tourism bureau: _____

Best attraction: _____

Best new attraction: _____

Best restaurant: _____

Best travel PR firm: _____

Best friend to journalists: _____

PREZ BOX

(Continued from page 2)

paid, fulltime employee, confer regularly on all NATJA matters, including convention planning.

Seen but not herd: Travel writers on assignment in the west may encounter "Goats at Work" signs. Herds of ravenous goats are proving baaaad news for noxious weeds that have become resistant to pesticides. Vail is just one of the western resorts that resorts to pruning by goat. The resort hired Ewe4ic Ecological Services, a five-year-old firm, instead of shelling out much more for gardeners and pesticides. The labor is cheap enough: owner Lani Lamming gets \$1 a day per goat plus the cost of shipping the herd from her Alpine, Wyo. headquarters. Her first assignment in Vail involved 600 goats. "Humans depend upon eyesight," she says, "but by the time they see the weeds, it is two years too late. The goats can sense them. They eat alien weeds and never touch the native elk thistle. They're very intelligent and they're better at vegetation management because there's no politics involved." She not only has a website (goatapelli.com) but competition (goatweedeaters.com), a Sacramento firm that started after she did.

Sponsors

(Continued from page 1)

- Crowne Plaza San Francisco International Hotel
- Delamar Greenwich Harbor
- Fairmont Le Manoir Richelieu
- Fairmont Scottsdale Princess
- Fairmont Southampton Princess, Bermuda
- The Fan House, Barnard, VT
- Grove Isle Hotel & Club, Coconut Grove, FL
- Hermosa Inn, Paradise Valley, AZ
- Hilton Los Cabos Beach & Golf Resort, Mexico
- Holiday Inn Airport, Jacksonville
- Holiday Inn, Mt. Kisco, NY
- Hotel Caravelle, St. Croix, USVI
- Hotel @ MIT, Cambridge, MA
- Hotel Monaco, Washington, DC
- Hotel Triton, San Francisco
- J.W. Marriott Las Vegas Resort
- J.W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort and Spa
- Montana: Best Inn & Conference Center, Missoula
- Mount Washington Hotel, Bretton Woods, NH
- Mutiny Hotel, Coconut Grove, FL
- Napa River Inn / Historic Napa Mill, Napa, CA
- New Age Health Spa, Neversink, NY
- Park Central New York
- Renaissance Vinoy Resort & Golf Club, St Petersburg, FL
- Rocky Mountaineer Railtours
- Ski Canada
- Westin Kierland Resort & Spa, Scottsdale, AZ
- Wyndham Hotels & Resorts (two nights @ any U.S. property)

MEMBERS

Press women award Feld's Washington-based website

The website of Washington, DC communicator **Karen Feld** has won first place in the annual National Federation of Press Women contest. The 65-year-old organization, which represents more than 5,000 professional journalists and communicators, has honored Feld every year since 1984. She received her latest award in Wilmington, Del. on Sept. 6. A columnist, broadcaster, lecturer, and sculptor, Feld is also the voice of Capital Connections, the Washington editor of Delta's Shuttle Sheet, and a board member of the Society of Professional Journalists (D.C. chapter). The winning website is www.karenfeld.com.

Linda and Steve Bauer of The Woodlands, Texas are co-authors of Recipes from Historic Texas, a 256-page illustrated paperback published by Taylor Trade Publishing in October. A newspaper food and travel columnist for 18 years, Linda previously wrote The American Sampler Cookbook and a sequel. She has appeared on CNN, The Today Show, and most recently on Regis & Kelly. Steve Bauer's At Ease in the White House details his service to five presidents, of both political parties. He's a retired U.S. Army colonel. For further information, contact Linda (Tel. 281-292-6526, linbauer@yahoo.com) or book publicist Elizabeth Weiss (Tel. 301-459-3366 x5627, Fax 301-429-5748, eweiss@rowman.com).

Cam Burns of Basalt, CO has authored an amazing 16 books at age 37. His latest is 50 Hikes in Colorado, published by Countryman Press, an imprint of WW Norton. The book describes 50 of the best Centennial State hikes, most of them in scenic mountain areas. Burns, who won a NATJA awards competition first prize for last year's The Shoes of Kilimanjaro & Other Oddventure Travel Stories, also won an Apex Award of Excellence for his design and layout of the earlier volume. He's at camburns@rof.net.

Special congratulations to NATJA executive director **Elizabeth Barnes** of El Segundo, CA upon her mid-summer marriage to Matt Beshear, president of Apollo Interactive, NATJA's parent company. She's still at elizabeth@natja.org. Matt made a major positive impression upon those who attended the Newport convention.

Historic places, new attractions compete for attention Hot trip ideas defray first chill of fall

ALASKA: Believe it or not, Fairbanks has published a winter travel guide. The 24-page brochure includes information on skiing, snowmobiling, dog-sledding, ice-sculpting, aurora and city tours, and even outdoor swimming in a lake fed by hot springs. Free copies of the informative-but-lighthearted 24-page brochure are available from advertising & PR manager Karen Lundquist, Fairbanks CVB, 550 First Ave., Fairbanks, AK 99701 (Tel. 877-551-1728 x227, klundquist@explorefairbanks.com).

AMELIA ISLAND: The southern-most of the Atlantic barrier islands stretching from the Outer Banks to Florida, Amelia Island is immediately south of Georgia's Golden Isles. Its only town is the Victorian-era fishing village of Fernandina Beach, named one of a Dozen Distinctive Destinations by the National Trust for Historic Preservation last November. Its 52-block historic district contains more than 450 sites on the national register. The only U.S. destination claimed under eight different flags, it also the birthplace of the modern shrimp industry. To arrange a visit, see www.ameliainland.org, then contact W. Patrick McSweeney, St. John & Partners Advertising & PR, Suite 400, 5220 Belford Road, Jacksonville, FL 32256 (Tel. 904-596-2085, Cell 904-923-4871, Fax 904-281-0030, patrickm@sjp.com).

BALTIMORE: Pimlico Race Course is the track where Seabiscuit beat War Admiral in 1938 in a race called "The Pimlico Special" and became an instant legend. Other legends with local roots range from Babe Ruth, Cal Ripken, Jr. and Johnny Unitas to Eubie Blake, Billie Holiday, Cab Calloway, Thurgood Marshall, and Barry Levinson. To retrace their steps, contact PR man

TRIPS FOR MEMBERS

Larry Noto, Baltimore Area Convention & Visitors Association, 12th floor, 100 Light St., Baltimore, MD 21202 (Tel. 800-343-3468, Fax 410-727-2308, Lnoto@baltimore.org).

BLUE SKY PR: To escape the first chill of fall, check out the current clients, which range from Sunset Beach Resort & Spa to Negril Cabins, Bermuda Resort Hotels, Bitter End Yacht Club, Guavaberry Golf & Country Club, Avalon Resorts, and Puerto Vallarta. Press rep is vice president Rebecca Kollaras, BlueSky PR, Suite 1101, 2455 E. Sunrise Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304 (Tel. 954-568-5450, Fax 954-568-5451, Rebecca.Kollaras@discoverblue.com).

CALIFORNIA: The Lodge at Torrey Pines, on the Pacific Coast near La Jolla, is a 175-room property with a 9500-square foot spa, gourmet restaurant, fitness center, and large outdoor pool. The site of the Buick Invitation Golf tournament is also a member of Leading Hotels of the World. To arrange a visit, contact Jennifer Hawkins, Hawkins International Public Relations, Suite 401, 119 W. 23rd St., New York, NY 10011 (Tel. 212-255-6541, Jennifer@hawkpr.com).

COOPERSTOWN: James Fenimore Cooper's Last of the Mohicans is centered in this photogenic Central New York hamlet. For most of the last century, the plush place to stay has been The Otesaga, a 1909 Grand Dame resort on the shores of Lake Otsego (baseball's Hall of Famers are always lodged there for Induction Weekend). This year, it is offering a two-night Family Thanksgiving Weekend

Celebration that includes movies, hayrides, area tours, tickets to the Hall of Fame, and more. To arrange a visit, contact Doug Greenberg at Nancy J. Friedman Public Relations (Tel. 212-228-1500, doug@njfpr.com).

COPPER CANYON: Mexico's Copper Canyon rail line, conceived in 1861, took a century to complete. Trestles, tunnels, gorges, waterfalls, and forests line the route, along with the primitive homes of the Taramuhara Indians. For an unforgettable first-hand look, take an 8-day, 7-night excursion in a vintage Pullman on the American Orient Express. Trip includes accommodations, dining, tours, and nightly entertainment. In operation since 1995, AOE offers eight regional itineraries throughout the U.S. and Mexico. The American Orient Express II was added late last year to increase the number of travel options. PR contact is Mary Jane Kolassa YPB & R Public Relations (Tel. 407-875-1111, MaryJane_Kolassa@ypbr.com).

DALLAS: The October opening of the \$70 million Nasher Sculpture Center, a 54,000-square foot building and 1.5-acre landscaped garden, is expected to establish a new cultural and educational resource that will attract visitors from around the world. The opening highlights the 20th anniversary of the downtown arts district and the 100th anniversary of the Dallas Museum of Art. PR contact is Ilana BI Simon, Resnicow Schroeder Associates, 11th floor, 1995 Broadway, NY, NY 10023 (Tel. 212-671-5150, Fax 212-595-8354, isimon@resnicowschroeder.com).

DISNEY WORLD: There's a new room design at Walt Disney World Swan, which goes from "whimsical" to modern luxury. Included is the all-white Heavenly Bed, a Westin innovation, and the first high-speed internet access at any Disney resort. Press rep for the Swan & Dolphin is Treva Marshall, president, TJM Communications, Inc., #300, 1025 Greenwood Blvd., Lake Mary, FL 32746 (Tel. 407-708-1823, Fax 407-708-1824, treva@tjmcommunications.com).

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Westin La Paloma wins Travel Media Showcase

Travel Media Showcase is moving again. After starting in Atlantic City and moving to Birmingham in its third year, the media marketplace was held in suburban Chicago just after Labor Day. Its 2004 venue will be the Westin La Paloma Resort and Spa in Tucson, Nov. 3-6.

The plush Arizona property is located a few miles north of Tucson in the Sonora Desert, near the foothills of the Santa Catalina Mountains. For further information, contact Marilyn Manson, media coordinator, 3-Way Street, 1st floor, 15 Hawthorne Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1S 0A9 (Tel. 877-277-4590, Fax 613-744-8645, journalists@travelmediashowcase.com).



TRIPS

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GETTYSBURG: There's more to Gettysburg than the national battlefield. Try ghost tours, apple festivals, antiquing, visits to President Eisenhower's farm, and more. The Gettysburg Hotel, established in 1797, features 99 historically-appointed rooms, 32 fireplace & Jacuzzi suites, and a three-bedroom historic guest house. It's 59 miles from Baltimore, 78 from Washington, and 118 from Philadelphia. Contact Randy Howat, vice president of sales & marketing (Tel. 610-357-2221, historicinnsusa@aol.com).

HERSHEY: Although Hersheypark is open only from May to September, the Pennsylvania chocolate town remains a year-round family destination. Three hours from Manhattan, 90 minutes from Philly, and two hours from Baltimore/Washington, Hershey Entertainment & Resorts Company owns and operates Hersheypark, ZooAmerica North American Wildlife Park, Dutch Wonderland Family Entertainment Complex, the Hotel Hershey, the Hershey Lodge & Convention Center, Hershey Golf Club, Hershey Highmeadow Campground, Hershey Nursery, Hershey Laundry & Textiles, GIANT Center, and the American Hockey League's Hershey Bears. New theme park rides include the year-old Roller Soaker, the north-east's first interactive water coaster, and a \$12.5 million hydraulic launch coaster with inversions, opening in May. There's an online naming contest at www.Hersheypark.com. To arrange a visit, contact Karen Krugel, Lou Hammond & Associates (Tel. 212-891-0215, karenk@lhammond.com).

IOWA: America's River, a multi-faceted \$188 million redevelopment

Foliage, festivals, witches, and wine mix

In addition to the national lure of fall foliage in New England, harvest festivals, Halloween preparations, and wine tastings are on the menu for communities comprising the North of Boston CVB. Publicist Aimee O'Brien Jeyarajan, who learned her craft well while working with Larry Meehan at the Boston CVB, now provides PR for 34 cities and towns that all have their own stories to tell. Haunted houses, harvest suppers, clambakes, cider-pressing, fall foliage drives, pumpkin-carving contests, and even end-of-season whale-watch tours are on tap throughout her bailiwick. Contact Aimee O'Brien Jeyarajan, director of public relations & marketing, 17 Peabody Square, Peabody, MA 01960 (Tel. 978-977-7760, aimee@northofboston.org).

project to be finished this fall, is making the Port of Dubuque a major travel destination. The America's River Project is the only place along the entire 2,400-mile stretch of the Mississippi with a multi-faceted campus celebrating the historic, environmental, educational, and recreational majesty of the mighty river. Further information is available from Amy Link, marketing manager, Dubuque CVB, Suite 200, 300 Main St., Dubuque, IO 52001 (Tel. 800-798-4748 or 563-557-9200, alink@dubuquechamber.com, www.americasriver.com).

MAINE: Point Sebago Resort plans Halloween themes, golf packages, and other fall getaways. The 775-acre resort, along the shores of Sebago Lake, is 30 minutes west of Portland and the home of a golf course voted Southern Maine's best this year by Golf Magazine. To learn more, contact always-accommodating PR man Greg Burk (Tel. 207-985-1766, greg@ims21.net or ims21@adelphia.net).

MANHATTAN: Mandarin Oriental, a 251-room property and world-class spa, opens this fall in the North Tower of the Columbus Circle Development with an exclusive entrance from West 60th Street. Part of a chain that includes 18 luxury hotels in key business and leisure destinations, the Mandarin Oriental invites travel journalists on assignments to experience a comp

night between Nov. 15 and Jan. 31, based upon availability. Contact Katie McCall, Lou Hammond & Associates, 39 E. 51st St., NY, NY 10022-5901 (Tel. 212-308-8880 Fax 212-891-0200, lha@lhammond.com).

NEW ORLEANS: The Hotel Monteleone may be a century old but doesn't look her age. The 573-room Royal Street property is the French Quarter's oldest and largest hotel. Most rooms have been recently refurbished with granite and marble bathrooms, large-screen televisions, high-speed internet access ports, and digital music stations. Press contact is Andrea Thornton, director of sales & marketing, Hotel Monteleone, 214 Royal St., New Orleans, LA 90130-2201 (Tel. 504-523-3341 x4479, Fax 504-681-4491, sales@hotelmonteleone.com).

NEW ZEALAND: The woman in charge of media visits to New Zealand is Simone Flight, PR manager for the USA & Canada, Tourism New Zealand, Suite 300, 501 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401 (Tel. 310-857-2207, Fax 310-395-5453, www.newzealand.com).

NORTH LAKE TAHOE: Writers on assignment are encouraged to contact the local resort association, which will help in planning an itinerary. The nation's largest alpine lake, various festivals and art events, and a myriad of fall and winter recreational events are planned for the scenic resort on the California/Nevada border. Press rep is Katrina Paz, North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, P.O. Box 5459, Tahoe City, CA 96145 (Tel. 530-581-4998, katrina@mytahoevacation.com).

ORLANDO: Known around the world for its theme parks, the area's diversity is highlighted in the 24-page Unexpected Orlando Travel Guide, produced by the local CVB. More than 100 listings, plus photos and maps, cover territory from cultural attractions to

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World-famous Waldorf spreads to silver screen

The first hotel to star in a major Hollywood film (the 1945 classic Weekend at the Waldorf), New York's venerable Waldorf-Astoria took a 21st-century star-turn in the Sept. 23 A&E special It's a Living. The two-hour show took a lighthearted look at the hotel's behind-the-scenes activities, as well as an hour-long journey through a typical day at the property. The hotel, with 1,425 rooms and 1,681,000 square feet, has been a Manhattan icon for more than a century.

It has housed every president since Herbert Hoover and remains the world's only hotel that doubles as an embassy. For further information, contact John Wedeles (johnw@lhammond.com) or Shelley Clark (shelleyc@lhammond.com) or call 212-891-0227/0204.

TRIPS

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recreational pursuits. Some of those pictures are among the 300 dpi downloadable photos at the media web site, orlandoinfo.com/media. Further information, and copies of the guide, are available from Michelle Salyer or Danielle Courtenay, APR (Tel. 407-354-5586, Fax 407-370-5002, media@orlandocvb.com).

PALM SPRINGS: Villa Royale Inn, a 31-room Mediterranean-style property, combines the charm of a B&B with the amenities of a full-service boutique hotel. The inn, a local staple since 1947, is just a mile from downtown Palm Springs. Media contact is Sue Lovato (Tel. 800-245-2314, suelovato@vil-laroyale.com).

PHILADELPHIA: The Franklin Air Show, newest exhibit at the Franklin Institute, opens to the public Oct. 18. The 5,000-square foot permanent exhibit, the fifth opened by the museum in the last three years, includes more than 20 interactive devices in three environments: an aircraft hangar, a midway, and a pilot training area. Aviation pioneers from the Wright Brothers to Amelia Earhart are featured. The opening of the Franklin Air Show, which emulates a busy public air show through sight and sound, coincides with the national Centennial of Flight. For further information, contact PR rep Evan Welsh, The Franklin Institute Science Museum, 222 N. 20th St., Philadelphia, PA 19103-1194 (Tel. 215-448-1176, Fax 215-448-1235, www.fi.edu/press/aviation).

PROVIDENCE: Though the popular NBC-TV show signed off, the Rhode Island capital is still winning plenty of publicity. Among other achievements, Providence was named "Best Place to

Pennsylvania lures visitors with rail attractions

Rail fans rejoice: Pennsylvania is blessed with a plethora of trains. Scranton hosts the 40-acre Steamtown National Historic Site, the only national park with moving parts, while Lancaster County has the Strasburg Railroad, Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, the Choo-Choo Barn, and the National Toy Train Museum. Altoona is home of the Railroaders Memorial Museum, the only one of its type in the world, and the Horseshoe Curve National Historic Landmark. A newly-designed website, www.PArailways.com, contains complete details, plus a listing of every train ride, railroad museum, and train-related attraction in the Commonwealth. For further information, contact Deb Gownley, Development Marketing Office, State of Pennsylvania (Tel. 717-787-5453, dgownley@state.pa.us).

Live in the East" by Money magazine (2000-1) and one of "Top 50 Cities That Sizzle" by Nation's Restaurant News (2001), while T.F. Green Airport was cited by Forbes as one of the top five alternative airports (2003) and by Conde Nast Traveler readers as the nation's third best airport (2001). Waterplace Park, Riverwalk, WaterFire, Providence Place mall, and the Rhode Island Convention Center are recent additions. To arrange a visit, contact Lauren Kedski Nicholson, director of communications, Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau, One West Exchange Street, Providence, RI 02903 (Tel. 401-274-1636, Fax 401-351-2090, www.GoProvidence.com).

SAN MATEO: Want sunshine and mild temperatures in a nautical setting? Try this territory of 447 square miles, located on a 50-mile peninsula south of San Francisco, bordered on the east by San Francisco Bay, on the west by the Pacific, and on the south by Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties. Attractions range from lighthouses to history museums, marine reserves, galleries, and gardens. And there's a myriad of year-round recreational activities. The area has 15,000 rooms in 140 properties of every description. Contact Margi Grant, San Mateo County CVB, Suite 410, 111 Anza Blvd., Burlingame, CA 94010 (Tel.

650-348-7600 x111, Fax 650-348-7687, margi@smccvb.com).

SPIRIT AIRLINES: This 13-year-old carrier, the nation's largest privately-held airline, serves Atlantic City, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Myrtle Beach, New York (LaGuardia), San Juan, and the Florida cities of Fort Lauderdale, Fort Myers, Orlando, Tampa, and West Palm Beach. In June, Spirit outperformed the 12 largest airlines in on-time performance, consumer complaint ranking, mishandled baggage, and cancellations. Press rep is Laura Bennett, Bennett & Company (Tel. 888-425-9993, Fax 407-425-6099, Laura@bennettandco.com).

TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS: To avoid oncoming snow, wind, ice, and hail, think southern climes. The corporate communications contact at the Turks and Caicos Tourist Board is Oneika Simons. Contact her at P.O. Box 128, Pond Street, Grand Turk, Turks and Caicos Islands (Tel. 649-946-2321, 2322, Fax 649-946-2723 or 2733, oneikasimons@tcway.tic).

VIRGINIA: The movie Gods & Generals features the first battle of Manassas. At the national battlefield park, visitors can traverse the fields where soldiers fought, and where Gen. Thomas Jackson received the nickname "Stonewall." Media relations manager Andrew R. Campanella promises not to turn visiting journalists into Manassas. Contact him at Prince William County CVB, Suite 105, 8609 Sudley Rd., Manassas, VA 20110 (Tel. 703-396-7130, Fax 703-396-7160, acampanella@visitpwc.com).

PR REPS: Mention in this column is free. Please send concise one-gram blurbs, along with complete contact info (phone, fax, e-mail, snail mail addresses) to NATJA, 10 Ballard Place, Fair Lawn, NJ 07410-3601, or e-mail dan@natja.org. No phone calls please.

Newport announces photography contest

NATJA members who carried their cameras to the Newport convention in May can win a two-night midweek getaway at the Castle Hill Inn and Resort, including breakfast daily and one dinner for two. That's the grand prize in "Newport.Style," a photo contest run by the Newport County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Three runners-up receive gift certificates to 22 Bowen's Wine Bar and Grille, the Black Pearl Restaurant, and the Stillwater Spa at the Hyatt Regency Newport.

Deadline for submission is Oct. 31.

For further details, see www.gonewport.com or contact Anne Marie McLaughlin, communications coordinator, Newport County CVB, 23 America's Cup Avenue, Newport, RI 02840 (Tel. 401-845-9151, Fax 401-849-0291, AnneMarieM@GoNewport.com).



Members will save big with Entertainment '04

The Entertainment book is back. Billed as the book that offers "100 per cent enjoyment at 50 per cent off," the Entertainment book is produced through the cooperation of more than 65,000 merchants and service providers.

After selling eight million copies last year, the coupon-packed paperback is available in more than 160 major markets throughout North America. Each edition contains significant discounts from hotels, airlines, car rental firms, theaters and shows, theme parks, a wide variety of additional attractions, fine-dining and fast-food restaurants, and more. Even car repair discounts and dry cleaning are included.

In addition to the offers within each book, each Entertainment membership gives consumers access to new offers, online discounts, and other valuable savings when a surname is registered at www.entertainment.com.

Often sold as a fundraiser, the Entertainment book raises roughly \$90 million annually for charitable causes. Based on coupons used in 2003, last year's Top 10 most coupon-savvy cities were, in order: Sacramento, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Vancouver, Pittsburgh, Portland (Ore.), Denver, and St. Louis.

The 2004 edition, available now, is priced from \$25-\$45 retail, depending upon the edition. Online savings subscriptions are also available (for \$14.99-\$39.99).

Although the national edition has been discontinued, many of the coupons contained there have been added to regional editions. NATJA members may request review copies of books from Jennifer L. Foss, director of communications, Entertainment Publications, Troy, MI (Tel. 248-458-5420, jfoss@entertainment.com).

BARNES

Elizabeth Barnes



Elizabeth Barnes

Getting set for Chicago

It's been awhile since I have had to write my column and I am excited to sit here today and write to the NATJA membership. I hope that all of you had a wonderful, eventful summer like I did. You may notice in my signature on my email an additional last name; that's right, I got married this summer. However, I do not want to confuse too many members or NATJA outsiders so for the next year I will be keeping my last name and the title of my column. Besides, it is kind of catchy.

What I am most excited about was that NATJA headquarters was extra busy this summer. As you all know by now, NATJA selected the city of Chicago to host our 2004 Conference & Marketplace. That's right, the heart of the Midwest, downtown Chicago!

Chicago beat out 15 other destinations that submitted top-notch proposals. All destinations that submitted a proposal to host our 2004 Conference were excellent, but NATJA had many factors in selecting a city. We looked at the actual location, possible story leads, and compatibility between NATJA and the city's tourism department.

Receiving so many proposals from amazing destinations is great for NATJA since it allows the organization a broad selection for our Conference & Marketplace for years to

come, but what is even more wonderful about receiving so many proposals is that these destinations were excited about potentially hosting the NATJA organization; they wanted the NATJA members in their city. NATJA is truly growing in a positive direction, and is now the second largest travel writer's organization in the US and Canada.

Remember that being an active member of the North American Travel Journalists Association enables you to access the "Member Services" site. After logging in with your User ID and Password at www.natja.org, you will have full range of the site. You can research a variety of publications under the "Resource Center," look up other members by clicking on the "Member Database," submit articles and photos for Travelworld Magazine by clicking "TWI Magazine," send messages to other active members and Associates through the "List Serve," and find past issues of The Wayfarer or surf through the archives of "FAMS & Conventions." Most importantly, members have access to a full-time employee, ME! Please feel free to call or e.mail me at anytime (I do have business hours 9-5:30pm PST).

The NATJA Website (www.natja.org) is also a great place for members to find detailed information regarding the organization, Awards Competition, and NATJA Conferences. NATJA will continue to build its site and suggestions are always welcomed.

EDITOR'S NOTES

PR shifts, prizes, books add spice to autumn

Windstar Cruises public relations manager **Mary Schimmelman** will soon be on maternity leave. Her interim replacement, until early 2004, is Sarah Scoltock, former communications director for the Northwest Marine Trade Association in Seattle. Contact her at 206-301-5445 x8445, Fax 206-286,3229, or sscoltock@hollandamerica.com . . .

Andria E. Mitsakos, former president of BlueSky PR, has a new venture: her own firm. To find out more, contact her at Andria Mitsakos Public Relations, Z-304, 777 E. Atlantic Avenue, Delray Beach, FL 33483 (Tel. 561-266-0568, Cell 954-294-4710, Fax 561-423-6223, andria@andriamitsakospr.com) . . .

The Celebration Hotel, built to resemble a 1900s Florida seaside inn, and its Plantation Room restaurant have both won AAA four-diamond awards. The hotel, with 115 rooms and six signature suites, features rooms that overlook the lake, nature preserve, and quaint town of Celebration. Each guestroom is decorated in old-fashioned Plantation style. The property is part of the Kessler Collection, which also includes the Casa Monica Hotel in St. Augustine and the Westin Grand Bohemian, Doubletree Castle House, Sheraton Studio City Hotel, Sheraton Safari Hotel, and the Red Horse Inn, all in nearby Orlando, plus three Savannah properties and one to open next year in Grand Junction, CO. Press rep is Mary C. Kenny, The Kessler Collection, Suite 120, 7380 Sand Lake Road, Orlando, FL 32819 (Tel. 407-996-9942, Cell 321-230-1707, mary.kenny@kesslercollection.com) . . .

Five **Four Seasons** hotels finished in the Top 20

in a survey by readers of Andrew Harper's Hideaway Report. Three of the five also were rated the best hotels in their respective cities. Winning both honors were the Ritz Carlton Chicago, a Four Seasons hotel readers ranked the No. 1 American city hotel, and Four Seasons in Boston and Chicago. Two other Four Seasons readers ranked best in their cities were the Philadelphia and Washington (Georgetown) locations. For further information, contact Sarah Leaf-Herrmann, Director of Public Relations, Four Seasons Hotel Boston (Tel. 617-351-2161, Sarah.Leaf-Herrmann@FourSeasons.com) . . .

Travel writers can request review copies of **Elegant Small Hotels: a Connoisseur's Guide** by **Pamela Lanier**. The 18th edition of this handsome handbook covers 246 grand luxe properties, city center hotels, resorts, country inns, and historic properties, with The 1864 Charlotte Inn of Martha's Vineyard gracing the cover. Hideaways International said of the 276-page volume,

"Every great hotel in this guide is unique." Contact scarpenter@travelguides.com . . .

Want to sleep in a lighthouse, a caboose, or a haunted house? Need to discover industry trends about B&Bs? Check out **BedandBreakfast.com**, home of the most comprehensive on-line press kit about bed-and-breakfasts. Media alerts, press releases, advice, and industry comparisons can all be found on the site, along with 27,000 listings for B&Bs and inns at home and abroad. Travelers can make reservations on-line, purchase gift certificates, subscribe to a free newsletter, and receive answers to virtually all questions. Travel journalists can dial up the site, click on media alert sign-up, or go directly to bedandbreakfast.com/about/pressRoom.aspx. Further information is available from editor Sandy Soule (Tel. 203-637-7642, Sandy.Soule@BedandBreakfast.com).



Firm helps travelers check luggage early

TRAVEL WITH KAL

Kal London

Checking in: I bet you thought the only way to check your bags with an airline is at the airport. Wrong!

A company called BAGS has started checking bags at two Orlando hotels (Rosen Centre and Rosen Plaza).

You check your bags at the hotels and two-and-a-half hours to 12 hours before your scheduled departure and don't see them again until you arrive at your destination. You also get your boarding passes in advance.

This program, just starting in Orlando, is expected to spread to other major cities soon. One of the partners involved in BAGS is Harris Rosen, owner of Rosen Hotels & Resorts.

New leader: Well, they did it; In the month of May, Southwest Airlines became the No. 1 carrier in boarding passengers. Delta was No. 2 and American No. 3.

Willing subjects: I found that the two most cooperative hotel companies in providing guests for my radio show are the Ritz-Carlton and the Fairmont. I just did a live phone interview from the Ritz-Carlton in Kuala Lumpur. I wish other companies

would be that cooperative. How many marketing people are up at 6 in the morning? I just did an interview with Greg Hanss, director of marketing at the Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North. He was calling me from his office at 6 a.m. local time.

Come north: A new company, ONLY INN NEW ENGLAND, headed by Christina Pappas, is promoting many popular New England hotels and inns. Some of her members are Basin Harbor Club, Harraseeket Inn, the Inn at Mystic, The Balsams, Emerson Inn by the Sea, Hotel Marlowe (Boston), and the Mt. Washington Hotel & Resort. She can be reached at 617-416-0744 (www.onlyinn.com).

Cruising again: Frank Del Rio, formerly of Renaissance Cruises, is back in the business. He's the co-CEO of Oceania Cruises, a line that caters to a 50-plus clientele that enjoys premier and deluxe

cruises. Oceania prices are very attractive and Frank is always willing to do interviews (truback@oceaniacruises.com). His main claim to fame is that he lived in my home city of New Britain, CT for nine years when he was a kid.

Save these dates: Travel Media Showcase 2004 is set for Tucson Nov. 3-6. Pow Wow is slated for Los Angeles April 24-28 and Travel South 2004 will be in Mobile Feb. 28-March 3. The American Society of Travel Agents is having its 2003 meeting in Miami Oct. 21-26. I hope to see you at all these events.

Car talk: For the latest information on Airport Valet Parking, see [Airport ParkingLots.com](http://AirportParkingLots.com).

Kal London, whose "Travel With Kal" radio show is heard daily over two Connecticut stations, formerly owned the largest travel agency in the Nutmeg State.



The WAYFARER

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