

# TourismMarketing Today

The Official Newsletter of Destinations Florida | [www.DestinationsFlorida.org](http://www.DestinationsFlorida.org) | October 2021



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## William D. Talbert III Inducted Into Florida Tourism Hall of Fame

*Florida DMOs Win 44 Flagler Awards, Sweep Best of Show*

Destinations Florida members enjoyed an elegant and exuberant night of celebration at the annual Chairman's Dinner held September 8 during the Florida Governor's Conference on Tourism. DMOs claimed 45 Flagler Awards (15 of them Henrys), DMOs swept the Best of Show awards, Destinations Florida itself claimed a Bronze award, and Greater Miami's Bill Talbert was inducted into the 2021 Florida Tourism Hall of Fame.



Bill Talbert (center) accepts a plaque commemorating his induction into the 2021 Florida Tourism Hall of Fame from Dana Young, president & CEO of VISIT FLORIDA, and Danny Gaekwad, chair of VISIT FLORIDA.

## Florida Tourism Hall of Fame

Since 2001, individuals have been chosen annually to be inducted into the Florida

Tourism Hall of Fame. This honor, presented by the VISIT FLORIDA Board of Directors, recognizes contemporary and historic figures whose vision, creativity and drive

*HALL OF FAME ... continues on pg. 3*

## Hall of Fame Tourism Marketing Advocate

*by Robert Skrob, CAE*



On behalf of all members of Destinations Florida, congratulations to William D. Talbert III, CDME,

on his induction into the Florida Tourism Hall of Fame. While Bill's list of accomplishments is long, one that stands out to me is his passionate advocacy at home and in Tallahassee for tourism marketing.

Over the last several decades, Bill has represented the bureau and the tourism industry at events throughout

*TOURISM MARKETING ADVOCATE ... continues on pg. 3*

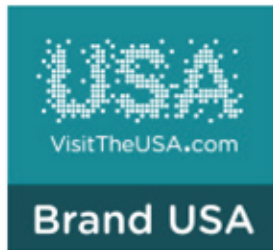
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have had a positive and significant impact on the development of Florida as a desirable visitor destination.

The 2021 Florida Tourism Hall of Fame inductee is William D. Talbert III, CDME. For more than three decades, Mr. Talbert has distinguished himself as a highly respected industry and community leader, serving as president & CEO of the Greater Miami CVB for the past 20 years, and COO for the prior nine. Throughout his tenure, the GMCVB has consistently posted record-breaking growth, helping welcome 29.4 million visitors in 2019 that generated an economic impact of nearly \$18 billion and 146,800 jobs. Other

major accomplishments include assisting with the passage of the United States Travel Promotion Act and the Miami-Dade County Food & Beverage Tax, as well as preparing five successful Super Bowl bids, and four U.S. Travel Association Pow Wow bids. He also helped secure a \$620 million renovation for the Miami Beach Convention Center and the establishment of the Black Hospitality Initiative of Greater Miami. Mr. Talbert's experience, expertise, and dedication have been essential to the success of Florida's tourism industry, and continue to make a positive impact on travelers from all over the world.

*See FLAGLER AWARDS on pg. 4*

**DESTINATIONS  
FLORIDA**  
TourismMarketing  
Today

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#### On the Cover

The 2021 Florida Governor's Conference on Tourism was held September 8-10 at The Diplomat Beach Resort in Hollywood, Florida. GC21 included the annual Chairman's Dinner where Greater Miami's William D. Talbert III, CDME, was inducted into the Florida Tourism Hall of Fame and many of Florida's DMOs were recognized with the prestigious Flagler Awards. See the story on page one.

## TOURISM MARKETING ADVOCATE ... continued from pg. 1

Miami-Dade many nights a week. There have been hundreds of galas, receptions, and dinner parties where he showed up to promote the bureau and the Miami brand.

Bill attended many Tourism Days over the last two decades, plus he also showed up in Tallahassee at critical times when no one else was looking. He's an advocate behind the scenes when it matters. And he used the relationships he fostered at all those events back home to advocate in Tallahassee for VISIT FLORIDA and to protect the use of the TDT.

Mr. Talbert deserves to be honored for his many



Bill Talbert, Kory Skrob, and Robert Skrob at the Governor's Conference Chairman's Dinner

accomplishments throughout his career. One of the many reasons to recognize Bill is his leadership and example as a tireless advocate for tourism marketing in Florida.



## Flagler Awards

The Flagler Awards were established in 2000 to recognize outstanding tourism marketing in Florida. As in previous years, the 2021 Flagler Awards drew entries from Florida's tourism partners, large and small. This year DMOs claimed 45 Flagler Awards, 15 of them Henrys (the top award in each category), and all three Best of Show. Destinations Florida is proud to recognize the award-winning DMOs, highlighted in blue text:

### Creativity in Public Relations

**Bronze:** The Amelia Island CVB for the Black History Month Virtual Fam Tour on Amelia Island  
**Silver:** The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel for Shellcast, The Podcast That's a Beach Break for Your Ears  
**Henry:** Visit St. Pete/Clearwater for St. Pete Pier Brought to Life with Virtual Media Tour

### Direct Marketing

**Bronze:** The Amelia Island CVB for Amelia Island Email Optimization  
**Silver:** Destin-Fort Walton Beach for Adventure Anywhere  
**Henry:** The Florida Keys & Key West for the Florida Keys COVID-19 Email Campaign

### Internet Advertising

**Bronze:** The Treasure Coast for the Don't Come Here Campaign  
**Silver:** Destin-Fort Walton Beach for Venture Out  
**Henry:** ZooTampa at Lowry Park for DINOS Alive – Digital Ads

### Mixed Media Campaign

**Bronze:** Visit South Walton for Virtual Beach Vibes  
**Silver:** ZooTampa at Lowry Park for the DINOS Alive – Campaign  
**Henry:** Destin-Fort Walton Beach for Adventure Anywhere + Venture Out

### Mobile Marketing

**Bronze:** The Florida Keys & Key West for Florida Keys – Mobile In-County Safety Messaging  
**Silver:** Visit Pensacola for the Visit Pensacola Holiday Trail App Promotion  
**Henry:** Destin-Fort Walton Beach for Adventure Anywhere

## Niche Marketing

**Bronze:** The Naples, Marco Island, Everglades CVB for the Only Paradise Will Do Eco Tourism Campaign  
**Silver:** The Florida Keys & Key West for the Florida Keys Diving and Snorkeling Campaign  
**Henry:** The Martin County Office of Tourism for Fish Like A Local

### Out-of-Home

**Bronze:** The Amelia Island CVB for the Amelia Island Innovative Outdoor Displays During the Pandemic  
**Silver:** The Florida Keys & Key West for Key West Billboard – We've never been more open.  
**Henry:** ZooTampa at Lowry Park for DINOS Alive Out-of-Home

### Print Advertising

**Bronze:** Naples, Marco Island, Everglades CVB for Cooking Up a Culinary Campaign  
**Silver:** The Santa Rosa Tourist Development Office for Open Air Fun Campaign – VISIT FLORIDA Vacation Guide  
**Henry:** The Florida Keys & Key West for Florida Keys Print – COVID-19 Phases

### Radio Advertising

**Bronze:** ZooTampa at Lowry Park for Creatures of the Night – Radio  
**Silver:** The Amelia Island CVB for the Amelia Island Escape Podcast  
**Henry:** The Florida Keys & Key West for Florida Keys Direct Flight Pandora Campaign

### Resource/Promotional Material – Consumer

**Bronze:** AMI Beach Weddings for the Anna Maria Island Weddings Magazine  
**Silver:** Visit St. Pete/Clearwater for the Visit St. Pete/Clearwater Gulf to Bay Magazine  
**Henry:** Experience Florida's Sports Coast for Sports Coast Pilsner

### Resource/Promotional Material – Trade

**Bronze:** Discover Crystal River Florida for Discover Crystal River Virtual FAM Tour Video  
**Silver:** The Florida Keys & Key West for the Florida Keys – Key Lime Academy Promotion  
**Henry:** The Amelia Island CVB for the Meet Amelia Island – Meetings Campaign

## Rural County Marketing

**Bronze:** Visit Sebring for the Sebring Area GeoTour: Florida's Hidden Gem

**Silver:** The Gulf County TDC for Wade In, COVID-19 Recovery

**The Henry:** The Franklin County TDC for the Forgotten Coast Mobile App

## Social Media Marketing

**Bronze:** The Island by Hotel RL for the Mermaid Tails Video Series

**Silver:** The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel for Beach Ready Spirit Week

**Henry:** The Martin County Office of Tourism for Moments of Escape

## Special Event

**Bronze:** Visit Sarasota County for Savor Sarasota Restaurant Week

**Silver:** The City of West Palm Beach for the West Palm Beach GreenMarket

**Henry:** Visit Panama City Beach for the Pirates of the High Seas Virtual Fest

## Sustainable Tourism Marketing

**Bronze:** The Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center for Sea Turtle Nesting Season at Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center

**Silver:** The Bradenton Area CVB for Love It Like A Local

**Henry:** The Florida Keys & Key West for Florida Keys: Protecting Paradise

## Television Advertising

**Bronze:** The Bradenton Area CVB for Love It Like A Local Television

**Silver:** The Florida Keys & Key West for Florida Keys Television

**Henry:** Destin-Fort Walton Beach for Venture Out

*FLAGLER AWARDS ... continues on pg. 6*



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### Tourism Advocacy

**Bronze:** Destinations Florida for the Valentine's Day Card Campaign

**Bronze:** Visit Lauderdale for the Visit Lauderdale Brand Reveal

**Silver:** Visit Central Florida for Be 5sweet

**Henry:** The Naples, Marco Island, Everglades CVB for the Local Tourism Impact Campaign

### Websites

**Bronze:** The Wynwood Business Improvement District for WynwoodMiami.com

**Silver:** The Amelia Island CVB for the Relaunch of Ameliasland.com

**Henry:** AMI Beach Weddings for AMIBeachWeddings.com

### Best of Show

**Annual marketing budget less than \$500,000:**  
The West Volusia Tourism Advertising Authority for the Cool Craft Beverage Trail

**Annual marketing budget between \$500,000 and \$2 million:** The Martin County Office of Tourism for Fish Like A Local

**Annual marketing budget greater than \$2 million:**  
The Florida Keys & Key West for the Florida Keys Diving and Snorkeling Campaign



The West Volusia Tourism Marketing Authority wins Best of Show for annual marketing budget of less than \$500,000. Pictured here are Danny Gaekwad, chair of VISIT FLORIDA; Brenda Sidoti of Benedict Advertising; Georgia Turner, executive director of the West Volusia Tourism Advertising Authority; and Dana Young, president & CEO of VISIT FLORIDA.



The Martin County Office of Tourism and Marketing wins Best of Show for annual marketing budget between \$500,000 and \$2 million, along with two Henry awards and a shared Bronze award with fellow Treasure Coast DMOs for Indian River and St. Lucie counties. Pictured here are Dana Young, president & CEO of VISIT FLORIDA; Ian Centrone, tourism public relations and community liaison for the Martin County Office of Tourism & Marketing; Nerissa Okiye, tourism director for the Martin County Office of Tourism & Marketing; and Danny Gaekwad, chair of VISIT FLORIDA.



The Florida Keys & Key West wins Best of Show for annual marketing budget of greater than \$2 million, along with four Henry awards, four Silver awards, and one Bronze award. Pictured here are Danny Gaekwad, chair of VISIT FLORIDA; Eric Gitlin of Tinsley Advertising; Danielle Salmán-Villasuso of Tinsley Advertising; Stacey Mitchell, director of sales for the Florida Keys & Key West; John Underwood, CEO of Tinsley Advertising; and Dana Young, president & CEO of VISIT FLORIDA.

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- Amelia Island Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Clay County Board of Commissioners
- Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches
- St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches Visitors & Convention Bureau
- Visit Jacksonville

## Amelia Island CVB's Hard Work Leads to Record Lodging Sales

The Amelia Island CVB was hopeful headed into summer; despite continued turbulence and uncertainty in travel, the groundwork had been laid for a successful season. Recent metrics show the CVB's hard work has paid off.

July taxable lodging sales set a new all-time record at \$27.6 million, breaking the July 2019 record by more than \$7 million and marking the fourth consecutive month of record high sales. TDT collections for July were up nearly 66% over July 2019. Barring any major storms, total TDT collections could top \$8 million this year.

"This success isn't a fluke; it's a result of smart, well-timed decisions made by our team of travel and marketing experts who knew what to push and when," says Gil Langley, president & CEO of the Amelia Island CVB. "Early this year we focused on summer travel, knowing people would be eager to get out and enjoy what Amelia has to offer. Behind these numbers was a strategic effort to target drive markets and promote our outdoor and beach activities."

In addition to record sales and TDT, the CVB led its comp set with a July YTD RevPar of \$189.85, which is more than \$28 higher than Amelia Island's closest competitor, Hilton Head, at \$152.79.



Kayaking is a favorite activity in Amelia Island, which drew record overnight visitors in July.



Visitors to the pristine beaches and other attractions in Amelia Island are contributing to monthly increases in TDT.





## Clay County Partners With PADL to Provide Easy Access to Paddleboards

Clay County recently partnered with PADL (PadL.co), a new paddleboarding sharing experience, similar to bike share



Black Creek in Green Cove Springs is a popular site for paddleboarding.

programs. PADL allows boarders to locate a nearby station to rent and unlock a paddleboard directly from a smartphone via a mobile app for iOS or Android. All safety gear is included with the rental of the board. When the board and gear are returned to the station, riders can find a summary of their trip available in the mobile app.



A PADL station at Camp Chowenwaw stands ready for visitors to rent a paddleboard.

PADL's first location in Clay County is at Camp Chowenwaw, located on Black Creek in Green Cove Springs. Located conveniently near the kayak launch, boarders can rent boards from sunrise to sunset. Other locations include Doctors Lake Park in Fleming Island, providing easy access to Doctors Lake and Swimming Pen Creek. In Middleburg, paddleboarders can find a rental station at the Main Street Boat Ramp with a dock launch directly into Black Creek.

"We are thrilled to offer Clay County visitors a new way to explore their passions on our local waterways and have plans to add more PADL rental stations in the future," says Kimberly Morgan, director of Clay County Tourism, Parks & Recreation.

## Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches Launches A1A Road Trip Campaign

Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches recently launched its A1A Road Trip campaign, following the scenic byway's designation as Florida's second All-American Road in February 2021. The micro-campaign features an interactive virtual road map with the destination's must-see parks, attractions, and restaurants. Each virtual stop includes a photo and video gallery, giving visitors their first look at the area.

"Our new interactive map is a user-friendly tool that incorporates a variety of key destination assets that traditional maps are lacking—beautiful imagery and detailed call-outs for each stop.



The A1A Road Trip campaign features an interactive map with detailed information for each stop.

It helps meet the needs of our drive-in visitors, an invaluable market during the COVID-19 era," says Amy Lukasik, executive director of Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches.

The campaign also highlights the Friends of A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway's free A1A audio tour. Visitors can learn about the history, culture, and natural beauty of the coastal roadway on the self-guided trip. Other elements of the project include a spotlight on A1A-branded apparel and souvenirs and a call to action that encourages travelers to share their photos using #VisitFlagler.

"The A1A Road Trip campaign has performed well across all our platforms, and due to its success, we hope to expand the campaign with additional video content in the future," Lukasik says.



The drive from A1A boasts unspoiled ocean views. Visitors are encouraged to share their road trip using #VisitFlagler.





## Florida's Historic Coast Uses Web-Based Content to Drive Visitation

Florida's Historic Coast is rebounding and breaking tourism records. The success of the recovery can be attributed to many things, including the VCB content development and review team. This team of staff members assures messaging to the consumer is relevant and served across all communication platforms.

The team's efforts have produced an extraordinary amount of optimized, web-based content around annual events, free things to do, enhanced imagery,

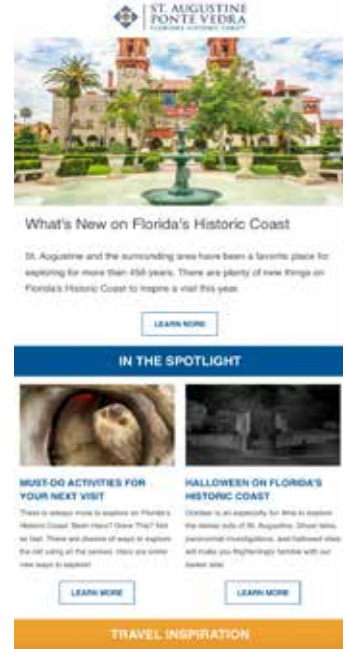


Floridashistoriccoast.com webpages are rich in content and imagery, and provide deeper dives for consumers to explore.

suggested itineraries, outdoor activities, and quarterly What's New pages highlighting new hotels, tours/exhibits, restaurants, etc. This content is pushed out via social platforms, in press releases and a monthly e-newsletter, and is incorporated throughout the *FloridasHistoricCoast.com* site.

"Our organized approach to optimize content has produced tremendous results," says Richard Goldman, president & CEO of St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches VCB. "Website page visits in June 2021 were up 156% over June 2020 and 56% over June 2019. July 2021 website visitation was up 36% over July 2020 and 67% over July 2019."

Website visitation and content development is just one of the tools used to measure the area's healthy tourism growth.



Florida's Historic Coast e-newsletter is a great example of communicating multiple content resources.

## Jacksonville Hosts U.S. Marines, Junior Olympics, and Virtual Media Missions to Boost Visitation, Economy

At the end of June, Visit Jacksonville announced the conclusion of a six-month stay of more than 7,500 U.S. Marine recruits at the Hyatt Regency Riverfront, resulting in a \$26 million impact for the city of Jacksonville. It was also the largest room contract ever in the history of all Hyatt hotels and allowed the property to maintain employment during the uncertainty of COVID.



Two Marines join Tommy Hazouri, Jacksonville City Council member, and Michael Corrigan, president & CEO of Visit Jacksonville, at a press conference at the Hyatt Regency Riverfront in Downtown Jacksonville.



A Junior Olympian competes in the long jump competition at the USATF Junior Olympics at Hodges Stadium at the University of North Florida.

"We were honored the Marines Corps chose Jacksonville for the recruiting mission," says Michael Corrigan, president & CEO of Visit Jacksonville. "This helped to usher Jacksonville into recovery from COVID-19 losses."

At the end of July, Visit Jacksonville hosted the USATF National Junior Olympics Track & Field Championships at the University of North Florida. More than 6,000 athletes from all 50 states participated, and the estimated economic impact of the event is more than \$11 million.

The Visit Jacksonville marketing and communications team recently hosted a virtual media mission showcasing the culinary culture of sustainable dining in Jacksonville. Articles continue to be written and have posted at PureWow, Yahoo LifeStyle, and Travel Pulse so far. This month the team will host another virtual media mission, this time focusing on the surf culture of Jacksonville's beaches.

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## Is Your Sublease Taxable?

by Steven M. Hogan

Today we take a diversion into other Florida tax issues to address something you may come across in your operations. The question is this: If you have office space that you sublease to another tenant, is that sublease subject to commercial rental tax?

The answer is *maybe!*

The place to start is with Florida's tax on commercial leases. Florida is somewhat unique in that it imposes a tax on commercial lease arrangements, which is a tax that is hard to find anywhere else other than New York City.

Generally speaking, every commercial lease is subject to the tax unless it is specifically exempt. The tax is due on the amount of rental consideration that changes hands, at the current rate of 5.5% plus the applicable discretionary surtax in the county where the leased property is located.



If you sublease office to another tenant, is that sublease subject to commercial rental tax? The answer is maybe.

Importantly, if a tenant *subleases* space to a subtenant, that lease is *also* subject to tax. This means that tax must be collected from the subtenant and remitted to the state.



Steven M. Hogan

This does not mean, however, that taxes get "pyramided" on top of each other. To the contrary, only one tax can be collected on the rental or license fee payable for the occupancy or use of any such property, so the tax collected will not be pyramided by a progression of transactions (or decreased by a progression of transactions). § 212.031(2)(b), Fla. Stat. This is true even when the property is leased and re-leased to subtenants. *Id.*

To handle this, when a landlord leases real property to a tenant that then re-leases the property to a subtenant (or subtenants), the landlord may accept a resale certificate from the tenant in lieu of collecting and remitting tax on the tenant's lease. Fla. Admin. Code r. 12AER21-10(9). In this way, the tax is imposed only on the subtenant that actually uses the property and the tax is not "pyramided" by a series of transactions. § 212.031(2)(b), Fla. Stat.

However, if the subtenant is a government entity or a nonprofit, the subtenant's lease will be *tax free*. The exempt subtenant must provide its exemption certificate (Form DR-14) to avoid paying the tax.

More information on this issue can be found in the Florida Department of Revenue's Publication GT-80016, available at this link: [bit.ly/taxonsublease](http://bit.ly/taxonsublease)

Steven M. Hogan is a shareholder with the Ausley McMullen law firm in Tallahassee. Destinations Florida has retained Mr. Hogan to consult with our members on the Tourist Development Tax and related legal issues. You can contact Mr. Hogan at [shogan@ausley.com](mailto:shogan@ausley.com). Nothing in this article constitutes legal advice. Please seek counsel of your own choosing before making decisions that impact yourself or your organization.



## CALL to ACTION Corner

### Florida Tourism Industry Leaders:

Here are two things you can do this month to help communicate the value of Florida tourism and tourism promotion:

- ✓ Send a copy of the *Destination Promotion: Empowering Florida's Growth* report to your local elected officials and the state legislators in your delegation. Email them a note with this link, [EmpoweringFloridasGrowth.com](http://EmpoweringFloridasGrowth.com), or ask us to mail you some printed copies of the report by emailing [Suzanne@DestinationsFlorida.org](mailto:Suzanne@DestinationsFlorida.org).
- ✓ Now that legislative committees have started to meet, it is critical that we get some face time with our state lawmakers and start building relationships. Reach out and ask if you can meet with them when they are home in the district. This is a great opportunity to start sharing with them the value and impacts of tourism on their district and constituents.

Thank you for continuing to be incredible advocates for the industry!



## The Paradise Coast Sports and Entertainment Complex Is a Shining Star

The Paradise Coast Sports and Entertainment Complex is quickly gaining traction as one of the premiere multipurpose sports and special events facilities in the country. With its state-of-the-art design and lineup of prominent regional and national sports tournaments such as Battle at the Beach and FBU Top Gun Showcase, the complex showcases the sports-centric offerings available in Florida's Paradise Coast. It is also home to the Naples United Football Club (a NAPS semi-pro soccer league) and a 3,500-seat stadium. [ParadiseCoast.com](http://ParadiseCoast.com)



A recent article in *North Naples News* stated, "Paradise Coast Sports and Entertainment Complex is the shining star among Florida sports venues." You can read the article at [bit.ly/northnaplesnews](http://bit.ly/northnaplesnews).

## Florida Keys & Key West Educates Public on Lobster Regulations

The Florida Keys & Key West launched an awareness campaign about regulations, safety protocols, and environmental responsibility during the two-day summer "mini-season" and the regular lobster season ending March 31. Initiatives included creating a video package, developing a comprehensive website ([KeysLobsterSeason.com](http://KeysLobsterSeason.com)) with diving and boating safety videos and updated Keys lobster regulations with daily limits and harvesting techniques, press releases, and a Florida Keys Lobster Regulations brochure. Results? A significant reduction in lobster violation citations. [Fla-Keys.com](http://Fla-Keys.com)



A diver demonstrates how to measure a Florida Keys spiny lobster. Photo: Frazier Nevins

## E Awards Celebrate Lee County's Hospitality and Tourism Professionals

The Lee County VCB held its 21<sup>st</sup> annual Elaine McLaughlin Outstanding Hospitality Service Awards to honor tourism professionals and their extraordinary customer service and dedication. The "E Awards" included 627 nominations for 467 individual nominees. Categories included: Other Services/Businesses; Restaurants; Transportation; Good Samaritan; Attractions; Accommodations; and Best Tourism Boss. A new category, the Masked Hero award, recognized JoAnn Elardo of Wicked Dolphin Rum Distillery for switching gears to produce hand and surface sanitizer for the community. [FortMyers-Sanibel.com](http://FortMyers-Sanibel.com)



Lee County VCB's Visitor Services team members welcome guests to the E Awards.

## Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach's Wyvern Hotel Receives Best Florida Hotel Pool Award

Recently named the 15<sup>th</sup> Best Florida Hotel Pool by *Vie Magazine*, The Wyvern Hotel's chic roof deck offers stunning 360-degree views of the beautiful Charlotte Harbor. Guests can bask in the glow of gorgeous fire pits or sip on craft cocktails from Perch360—the hotel's rooftop bar and restaurant sourcing fresh ingredients from the rooftop herb garden or escape the heat and relax inside at 88 Keys, featuring contemporary American cuisine nestled in the backdrop of local authentic art and an art deco piano bar. [PureFlorida.com](http://PureFlorida.com)



Perch360, the rooftop bar and restaurant of The Wyvern Hotel, overlooks downtown Punta Gorda and Charlotte Harbor.





## Visit South Walton Wins Bronze Flagler for Virtual Beach Vibes Campaign

Visit South Walton was honored as the recipient of a Bronze Flagler Award in the Mixed Media category for its Virtual Beach Vibes campaign, which aimed to showcase the South Walton experience to visitors from the comfort of their homes while keeping the destination top of mind for future travel. The social component of the campaign saw more than 27 million impressions and 1.2 million minutes of video content consumed. More than 67,000 emails (focusing on health and safety) were deployed, and the "Stay Strong" video garnered more than 1 million impressions. [VisitSouthWalton.com](http://VisitSouthWalton.com)



Visit South Walton's Kelli Carter, director of marketing, and Jason Cutshaw, interim executive director, are all smiles after receiving a Bronze Flagler Award. Photo: Visit South Walton

## Martin County Launches New Memory Makers Video Series

The Martin County Office of Tourism & Marketing recently launched its latest YouTube video series, *The Memory Makers of Martin County*. Every episode will introduce viewers to some of the fascinating figures and impressive personalities that make Martin County such a special destination. The first installment takes place at the incredible Elliott Museum in Stuart and features Rob Steele, president & CEO of the Historical Society of Martin County. [DiscoverMartin.com](http://DiscoverMartin.com)



The goal of the *Memory Makers* series is to highlight the diverse members of the Martin County community who pour their passion into creating memorable moments for visitors.

## Bradenton Area Selects Honorary Local in Love It Like A Local Campaign

After numerous photo submissions of guests visiting responsibly while in the Bradenton Area, Amy of Austin, Texas, has been chosen an Honorary Local for sharing how she respects and preserves the area. As the Love It Like A Local campaign winner, Amy received a trip back to the Bradenton Area to enjoy the beautiful island beaches while showing others how to protect this paradise for years to come. [BradentonGulfIslands.com](http://BradentonGulfIslands.com)



Amy of Austin, Texas, is an Honorary Local of the Bradenton Area.

## Earned TV Coverage Bolsters Caladium Festival Attendance

The 30<sup>th</sup> annual Lake Placid Caladium Festival ([CaladiumFestival.org](http://CaladiumFestival.org)) returned in July with record attendees, vendors, bus tour participants, and plant/bulb sales. Demand was high this year due to a cancelled 2020 festival and two pre-festival television segments, secured by Visit Sebring, promoting the event and encouraging visitation. Lake Placid, Florida, is the Caladium Capital of the United States. [VisitSebring.com](http://VisitSebring.com)



Caladium grower Danielle Daum appears on the *Daytime TV Show* to discuss the Lake Placid Caladium Festival.



## Visit Orlando Unveils Three-Year Strategic Plan

Visit Orlando recently unveiled a new three-year strategic plan at its annual Business Insights Luncheon and Economic Forum. In addition to a new set of core values, a new vision, and a new mission, the DMO also established new targets: by the end of 2024, it will achieve 80 million annual visitors and generate 40 million room nights. To accomplish this, it's focusing on four primary areas—sales & marketing, destination management, destination alignment, and organizational sustainability. [VisitOrlando.com/about-us](https://www.visit-orlando.com/about-us)



Visit Orlando President & CEO Casandra Matej reveals new strategic plan for the organization.

## Visit Panama City Beach Wins Henry Award for Pirates of the High Seas Festival

Visit Panama City Beach's Pirates of the High Seas Festival won the Henry award for the Special Events category. This is the third consecutive year Visit Panama City Beach has won this prestigious award. In 2019, Visit Panama City Beach won the Henry in the Resource/Promotional Material – Consumer category for its Décor by the Shore campaign. The next year in 2020, the team received the Henry in the Sustainable Tourism Marketing category for the Stay it Forward voluntourism campaign. [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](https://www.visitpanamacitybeach.com)



Visit Panama City Beach accepts the Henry for its Virtual Pirates of the High Seas Fest.

## Experience Kissimmee Shows Appreciation Through Artwork

Experience Kissimmee recently teamed up with local performing arts center and gallery Osceola Arts to create a piece of artwork that best represents Kissimmee. This vibrant canvas shows the symbols and activities of the destination including the lighthouse, a favored landmark of Kissimmee Lakefront Park. This piece of art was shared with Osceola County's Board of County Commissioners at the Sept. 13 meeting and is now on display as a temporary exhibit in the county office near the commission's chambers. [ExperienceKissimmee.com](https://www.experiencekissimmee.com)



Experience Kissimmee's President/CEO DT Minich presents local artwork to the Board of County Commissioners.

## Nature Coast Discovery Center Reopens in October

The UF/IFAS Nature Coast Biological Station's Discovery Center is reopening to the public on Saturday, Oct. 16, during the annual Cedar Key Seafood Festival. Visitors can explore the public education room and wet lab on the first floor of the facility in downtown Cedar Key and meet some of the favorite local inhabitants like popular sportfish red drum and snook, along with "Wilbur" the Suwannee River alligator snapping turtle. The Discovery Center will be open during business hours and periodically on weekends through the winter/spring tourist season. [VisitLevy.com](https://www.visitlevy.com)



The Levy County BOCC, Levy County Visitors Bureau, and RESTORE Act Advisory Committee partnered with the University of Florida to build the Aquarium at the Nature Coast Biological Station in Cedar Key.





## Clay County Introduces Downloadable Savings Passport

Clay County has partnered with Bandwango, a destination experience engine, to create engaging content and savings for visitors. Using an exclusive downloadable passport from their mobile device, visitors gain access to a collection of curated attractions, retailers, and restaurants offering discounts to use during their time in Clay County. Delivered via a special landing page, there is no app to download and the collection of discounts is updated regularly. [fun.ExploreClay.com](http://fun.ExploreClay.com)



Explore Clay's Big PASSions downloadable passport offers discounts on attractions such as paddleboard rentals.

## Orlando North, Seminole County Gets a Little Spookier

Orlando North, Seminole County partnered with the Oviedo Mall to host a giveaway for tickets to the county's newest immersive haunted experience, Scream N' Stream. This drive-through haunted house arms visitors with their own laser guns, allowing them to battle clowns and zombies, all from a safe distance inside their vehicles. The giveaway was aimed at promoting the Oviedo Mall as a destination for visitors to include in their fall itinerary when they visit Orlando North. [DoOrlandoNorth.com](http://DoOrlandoNorth.com)



Scream N' Stream at the Oviedo Mall is Orlando North's newest haunted attraction.

## PCTSM Hosts International Lacrosse Event With Eye on the Olympics

Polk County Tourism and Sports Marketing recruited the Pan-American Lacrosse Association (PALA) inaugural PALA Sixes Cup tournament to Auburndale. The September event featured 10 men's and women's teams from Argentina, Colombia, Panama, Peru, the territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Iroquois indigenous confederacy. The International Olympic Committee recently granted full recognition to World Lacrosse, and the sixes format was developed to assist lacrosse in the quest to be designated an official Olympic sport. [VisitCentralFlorida.org](http://VisitCentralFlorida.org)



International lacrosse players compete in the PALA Sixes Cup tournament.

## Travel Show Host Denella Ri'chard Films Segments in Greater Miami

To promote Miami's award-winning Miamiland campaign, the GMCVB hosted Denella Ri'chard, host of the travel show *Traveling with Denella*, which airs on The CW South Florida (WSFL) and streaming broadcaster CJC Network (combined audience reach of more than 70 million). The program is also featured on American Airlines and United Airlines inflight programming entertainment. The show filmed segments in areas throughout the destination, highlighting Miami's great outdoor adventures and open spaces. [MiamiAndBeaches.com](http://MiamiAndBeaches.com)



Travel show host Denella Ri'chard films a segment on location at the Everglades Alligator Farm.





## U.S. Navy Blue Angels Returning to Pensacola Beach

With the 2021 Blue Angels Homecoming Air Show was facing cancellation due to COVID-19 restrictions, Visit Pensacola alongside community leaders took the lead in moving the oldest operating demonstration flight team in the world to Pensacola Beach. "We couldn't let the Blue Angels end their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary season with a canceled hometown show," says Darien Schaefer, president/CEO of Visit Pensacola. "Visit Pensacola, alongside Escambia County, Santa Rosa Island Authority, and Kia Autosport, is very proud to bring the Blue Angels home on Pensacola Beach this November." [VisitPensacola.com](http://VisitPensacola.com)



The U.S. Navy Blue Angels will headline the 2021 Homecoming Air Show along Pensacola Beach Nov. 5-6.

## Space Coast Tourism Has Best Summer Ever

The Space Coast Office of Tourism had its best summer ever from a TDT perspective thanks to the summer campaign with a budget of \$2 million. Measuring actual visitor bookings and spending as a direct result of the campaign, there was a 50:1 ROI and website engagement was up 79% year over year. Cruising has returned successfully, and 12 major ships are expected to call Port Canaveral home in 2022. Tom Bartosek, travel trade industry coordinator, attended Cruise360 in July with representatives from three Space Coast hotels in the Cape Canaveral/Cocoa Beach area. [VisitSpaceCoast.com](http://VisitSpaceCoast.com)



Tom Bartosek with local hotel representatives at Cruise360

## Visit Sarasota County Hosts 2021 Annual Florida Outdoor Writers Association Conference

After being delayed from 2020 to 2021 due to the pandemic, Visit Sarasota County had the pleasure of hosting the annual Florida Outdoor Writers Association (FOWA) Conference throughout Sarasota County. FOWA was given the opportunity to experience some of the best outdoor activities and excursions in the area, as well as enjoy some of the finest dining. The opening reception at Historic Spanish Point and the mid-excursion lunch at Snook Haven were amongst the conference highlights. [VisitSarasota.com](http://VisitSarasota.com)



FOWA members enjoy an outdoor lunch at Snook Haven, a barbeque restaurant in Sarasota County.

## Citrus County TDC Wins 3CMA Silver Circle Award

At the 2021 3CMA Savvy Awards, the Citrus County TDC proudly walked away with the Silver Circle Award in the Marketing and Tools-Economic Development category. The submission, Citrus County Tourism Supports VISIT FLORIDA, was a rollover from the postponed 2020 3CMA Convention. The video highlighted industry partners that supported continued funding of VISIT FLORIDA and was used during the 2019 Florida Legislative Session. The message behind the video was "Small Business. Jobs. Citrus County relies on VISIT FLORIDA." [DiscoverCrystalRiverFL.com](http://DiscoverCrystalRiverFL.com)



A bird's-eye view of Crystal River, Florida





## Visit St. Lucie Launches Billboard Campaign in South Florida

In mid-August, Visit St. Lucie launched an outdoor billboard campaign targeting residents and tourists in the Miami/Fort Lauderdale area—a strong and consistent drive market for St. Lucie. The eight-week campaign utilizes both static and digital billboard displays, and the billboards are located on heavily trafficked roadways such as the Florida Turnpike, I-95, and the Airport Expressway. The awareness campaign will generate an estimated 16.4 million impressions keeping the destination in the minds of travelers. [VisitStLucie.com](http://VisitStLucie.com)



A Visit St. Lucie billboard promotes Carefree Getaways in Fort Pierce, Port St. Lucie, and Hutchinson Island.

## Visit St. Pete/Clearwater Sales Efforts Abound

While meetings business continues to ebb and flow with the pandemic, Visit St. Pete/Clearwater has been busy with some of the industry's largest travel shows. Earlier this month, VSPC represented the destination at Connect 2021, as well as at RTO Summit South at the Tampa Convention Center. VSPC also attended U.S. Travel's ESTO, where the DMO was a finalist for three industry awards. Topping it off, the team came home from the Florida Governor's Conference with two Flagler Awards, one Henry and one Bronze. [VisitStPeteClearwater.com](http://VisitStPeteClearwater.com)



VSPC takes the Henry award for Creativity in Public Relations for a virtual FAM of the St. Pete Pier.

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## Cities of the Southeastern Conference Partner on SEC Game Day Blogs

Visit Gainesville, Alachua County partnered with tourism offices representing the 14 cities of the Southeastern Conference on a series of blogs published on the *SECsports.com* website highlighting the rich culture of SEC cities across an 11-state footprint. The blogs invite fans to experience the best of game days in the Gator Nation, featuring local restaurants, attractions, and the football traditions that make Florida's largest stadium, Ben Hill Griffin Stadium, aka, "The Swamp," an unforgettable fan experience. [VisitGainesville.com](http://VisitGainesville.com)



Albert and Alberta welcome fans to Ben Hill Griffin Stadium in Gainesville. Photo: Visit Gainesville, Alachua County

## Visit Jacksonville and the Beaches Local Ambassador Program Grows

Visit Jacksonville and the Beaches recently added its 16<sup>th</sup> member to the Visit Jax Local Ambassadors list. The hand-selected group of local influencers provide a unique point of view on everything there is to see, do, and experience in Jax. Ambassadors range from fishing enthusiasts to foodies, moms, dogs, surfers, local business owners, and more. [VisitJacksonville.com](http://VisitJacksonville.com)



Learn more about the Visit Jax Local Ambassadors at [bit.ly/3lsHaBl](http://bit.ly/3lsHaBl).



## In the News

### Visit Tampa Bay Welcomes Director of Global Sales Stefanie Zinke

Visit Tampa Bay (VTB) announces Stefanie Zinke has joined the team as the new director of global sales. Zinke's global experience and industry relations span from Europe to South America. She comes to VTB from The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel where she worked as the senior international tourism sales manager. Her global expertise and proficiency in four languages, including English, Spanish, German, and Portuguese, are key as borders open and VTB works toward full recovery for the destination. [VisitTampaBay.com](http://VisitTampaBay.com)



Stefanie Zinke

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## Legal Resource for Your DMO

As a member benefit for you, Destinations Florida has retained Steven M. Hogan with the Ausley McMullen law firm to provide insight into the operation of the TDT and related issues to Destinations Florida.

There are several situations where it would be helpful for you to have a legal opinion for your community. As a member benefit, you can speak with Mr. Hogan about the facts and laws at a general level.

To take advantage of this program, feel free to reach out to Steve Hogan at the information below:



**Steven M. Hogan**  
Ausley McMullen  
850/224-9115  
[shogan@ausley.com](mailto:shogan@ausley.com)

If you require specific advice on decisions that your DMO will make under the TDT or other law, you can hire Mr. Hogan to advise you separately as your lawyer.

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**INSIDE: Florida Tourism Hall of Fame inductee and Flagler Award winners announced.**

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## Destinations Florida



Destinations Florida serves as the single unifying voice for all of Florida's DMOs, providing continuing insight and direction as we face an increasingly competitive tourism marketplace. Organized in 1996, Destinations Florida strives to increase the overall effectiveness of Florida DMOs' destination marketing efforts through industry education, legislative outreach, enhancing professionalism and facilitating communication.

Destinations Florida represents the 55 official county DMOs that promote their communities throughout the world. Tourism promotion activities help to attract 131.4 million visitors to Florida, adding \$96.5 billion to Florida's economy and supporting more than 1.6 million jobs. These activities are made possible by Tourist Development Taxes provided by Florida Statutes Section 125.0104. Statistics: VISIT FLORIDA Research

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