

# Industry Briefs

The **Remington Suite Hotel** received a TripAdvisor® Certificate of Excellence award. The accolade, which honors hospitality excellence, is given only to establishments that consistently achieve outstanding traveler reviews on TripAdvisor and is extended to qualifying businesses worldwide. Only the top-performing 10 percent of businesses listed on TripAdvisor receive this prestigious award.

The **Hilton Garden Inn/Homewood Suites** won the 2013 Success Award for Hilton Garden Inn. This award recognizes the hotel as one of the top 5 percent out of 586 Hilton Garden Inn hotels worldwide.

Today's guests don't want to just visit, they want to experience your attraction, festival or event. To help you create a memorable guest experience, Julia Foley and Bonne Summers, owners of Apex Events, will immerse you in an unforgettable seminar that engages all five of your senses, Monday, May 12 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Shreveport Little Theatre, located at 811 Margaret Place, Shreveport. Titled **"Customizing Your Guests' Experiences,"** participants will learn how to develop their "story," create winning customer guest experiences, and leave with ideas for their own business.

Attendees to this seminar, who have also completed a marketing plan, can apply for a grant of up to \$1,000 to customize their guests' experiences. So you don't want to miss this opportunity to learn and be rewarded for your creativity. Please RSVP to 318-222-9391. Seating is limited.

Log on to [www.shreveport-bossier.org/partners](http://www.shreveport-bossier.org/partners) for industry events and updates

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news from shreveport-bossier convention & tourist bureau

# TRAVEL TALK

May - June 2014

## P.R.I.D.E. Awards Honor the Best in Customer Service

The 2014 P.R.I.D.E. Awards, an annual presentation of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, will be held at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, May 15 at the Horseshoe Casino Riverdome. The evening will feature an awards program honoring the most outstanding employees in Shreveport-Bossier's hospitality and tourism industry. Submissions were sought for more than 30 award categories, ranging from Outstanding Valet to

Outstanding Hotel Executive, and hospitality industry businesses like hotels, restaurants and tourist attractions. The evening's final award, the P.R.I.D.E. Master Award, is the region's highest honor among tourism and hospitality professionals.

The acronym P.R.I.D.E. stands for "Proud Residents Involved in Developing our Economy." The awards are held each year in early May, in conjunction with National Travel and Tourism Week, which is observed during the first full week in May.

"Front line workers like front desk staff, valets, servers and house-keeping – they are such a large part of our tourism industry," said Kelly Wells, vice president of sports and tourism marketing for the Tourist Bureau. "The main focus of the P.R.I.D.E. Awards is to recognize those employees during our industry's most prestigious event of the year."



P.R.I.D.E. Awards are given to individuals who exemplify great customer service.

## Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne to Promote Benefits of Tourism at Media Event, May 6

To mark this year's National Travel and Tourism Week, May 3-11, Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne and the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau will have a news conference, 1 p.m., May 6 at the newly-renovated Municipal Auditorium to promote the economic benefits of travel in Shreveport-Bossier and Louisiana. The public is invited to attend this free event.

Locally, tourism employs some 44,635 people, according to the Louisiana Workforce Commission. Adding to that, visitors spent \$900 million in Caddo and Bossier parishes and left behind \$58.7 million in state and local taxes in 2012.



Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne

For area citizens that is important, because the \$58.7 million paid in sales taxes by overnight visitors reduced each Caddo and Bossier Parish resident's tax burden by \$410.

"We need tourism to remain healthy in Shreveport-Bossier," said Stacy Brown, president of the Tourist Bureau. "Our hospitality industry employs so many people and means so much to so many families. We hope our community will rally with us at this news conference."

"Icy treats rule at **Geauxsicles Gourmet Popsicles**, [www.geauxsicles.com](http://www.geauxsicles.com). There are over a dozen unusual flavors including mojito, hazelnut, banana and my favorite PB&J. All of the popsicles are emblazoned with Louisiana State's Fleur de Lis."

– Howard Hian, Military Press  
(North American Travel Journalists Association 2013 Conference Attendee)

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## Dates to Remember:

### Hospitality Breakfast

June 4 8 a.m., Harrah's Louisiana Downs

### Hotel and Lodging Association

May 13 Noon, Venue TBD  
June 10 Noon, Venue TBD  
For more HLA info, contact Cindy Lubbe at [cindy.lubbe@dimdev.com](mailto:cindy.lubbe@dimdev.com)

### Shreveport-Bossier Attractions Association

May 12 9 a.m., Shreveport Little Theatre. To RSVP call 222-9391



Convention & Tourist Bureau  
629 Spring Street  
Shreveport, LA 71101





## May/June

- 5/2-3 Gusher Days Festival. Earl G. Williams Park
- 5/3 Cinco de Mayo. Festival Plaza
- 5/3 Ascend Combat "Mayhem 4". Municipal Auditorium
- 5/3-4 Northwest Louisiana Master Gardeners Les Tours
- 5/3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Great Raft Brewing tours.
- 5/10 Northwest Louisiana District Senior Games. Red River Bowmen Archery Club
- 5/10 KISS Country Fest. Festival Plaza
- 5/10 Poke Salad Festival. Blanchard
- 5/10 Repticon Shreveport Reptile & Exotic Animal Show. Shreveport Riverview Hall
- 5/22-25 Mudbug Madness Festival. Festival Plaza
- 5/22 Ragtime. Emmett Hook Center
- 5/24 Dierks Bentley. Horseshoe Casino
- 5/24 3-D Archery Shoot. Red River Bowmen Archery Club
- 5/24 Honoring the Brave. Splash Kingdom Water Park
- 5/30 Hypnaughty with Thom Kaz. Margaritaville
- 5/31 Cross Lake Flotilla. American Legion
- 5/31 Rib Tip Express' BBQ Cook-Off. Columbia Park
- Thru 6/30 Sunflowers Blooming on the Byway. Hwy. 3049
- 6/1 Highland Open Studio Tours Sunday. 436 Topeka St., Shreveport
- 6/2 Whiplash the Cowboy Monkey. Splash Kingdom Water Park
- 6/2 Jack White. Municipal Auditorium
- 6/6 Adam Trent Magician. Strand Theatre
- 6/7 "Look Up" American Rose. Gardens of the American Rose Center
- 6/13 Stayin' Alive: Tribute to the Bee Gees. Strand Theatre
- 6/13 Easton Corbin in Concert. Horseshoe Casino
- 6/14-15 NFAA Southern Outdoor Sectional Archery. Red River Bowmen Archery Club
- 6/20-22 Let the Good Times Roll Festival. Festival Plaza
- 6/21 Sunflower Trail & Festival. Gilliam
- 6/28 A Little Princess. Marjorie Lyons Playhouse
- 6/28 Superhero Day. Splash Kingdom Water Park

shreveportbossierfunguide.com

for a **fun** time... **CLICK!**



Submit your events on the Fun Guide for FREE

**Erica Howard**, group tour sales manager, **Suzanne Manfreidi**, convention sales manager, and **Chris Jay**, public relations and social media manager, organized a site visit for Liz Bittner, executive director and chief operating officer



Erica Howard, group sales manager

for Travel South along with other key staff members, April 2-4, to prepare for the March 2015 conference. The group toured places such as Great Raft Brewing, Shreveport Convention Center, Sam's Town Casino, and the Municipal Auditorium. Travel South is expected to bring more than 500 premier travel and tour operators, as well as 35 travel journalists.



The Bossier Parish Police Jury honored **Luke Turner**, former board chairman for the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, March 19. Turner served on

the board for 11 years.

**Carolyn Dowden**, convention services manager, traveled to Baton Rouge in April to welcome the Desk and Derrick Conference that will be held in Shreveport-Bossier, March 2015. She did the same thing for the Inland, Port and

Terminals, Inc. in St. Louis, Mo, April 28-May 2. The group will be meeting for the first time in Shreveport-Bossier, April 2015.

**Taylor Jamison**, sports sales manager, and **Sheila Norman**, sports/tourism administrator, attended the 2014 National Association of Sports Commissions Symposium, March 31-April 3, in Oklahoma City, Okla. They met with rights holders for future events and sports commissions from across the country to learn best practices and the future outlook for sports tourism.

The **Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission** landed the 2016 Southern Bowling Congress tournament, which will span five weeks and is estimated to have 12,000 plus attendees. The Northwest Louisiana Bowling Association, All-Star Lanes and Holiday Lanes partnered with the Sports Commission to make this bid a success.

Representatives from the Family Motor Coach Six-State Rally Association had a successful site visit in April. Johnny Wessler, Steve Smith and **Kevin Flowers**, convention services manager, gave the approximately 80 attendees tours of several local attractions to showcase what Shreveport-Bossier has to offer. Hosted by Chris Giordano at the Fairgrounds, the RV group will return in October with about 700 motorcoaches and 1400 people for its annual Six-State Rally.

## Hospitality Industry Partners in Great American Cleanup

Several local hospitality industry organizations banded together to combat litter in Shreveport-Bossier by taking part in the Great American Cleanup on Saturday, April 12. This group included representatives of the Shreveport-Bossier Hotel and Lodging Association, the Shreveport-Bossier Attractions Association, and the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau.

Shreveport-Bossier's Great American Cleanup activities were led by Shreveport Green and assisted by Keep Bossier Beautiful. Members of the public were invited to form Great American Cleanup teams and

join hundreds of others in removing trash from area businesses, parks, neighborhoods, vacant lots, and waterways.

"This is our 22nd year doing a citywide cleanup," said Donna Curtis, executive director of Shreveport Green. "Although cleanups aren't the clean answer, they are an immediate fix to beautifying the landscape of our community."

Great American Cleanup teams gathered trash, 8-10:30 a.m., and dropped it off at the Louisiana State Fairgrounds by noon. Following the drop-off, teams enjoyed food, got to visit educational booths, and won cash prizes at the Louisiana State Fairgrounds.



City leaders pledged to support local efforts to eradicate litter at a news conference to kick-off the Great American Cleanup.



## Municipal Auditorium Reopened After a Year of Renovations

April 3, Shreveport Mayor Cedric Glover officially reopened the Municipal Auditorium after a yearlong renovation project. The current rehabilitation work included carefully redesigned components to make the 85-year-old building ADA compliant. Air conditioning and heating were expanded throughout the entire building.

The interior work includes a redesigned wheelchair ramp and seating platform in the arena, new seating, and refinishing of the wood floor in the arena. The exterior work provided for repair of the windows,



Mayor Cedric Glover and city leaders officially reopened the Municipal Auditorium.

new front steps, and removal of some non-conforming historical elements. Other renovations included improvements to the concessions areas and dressing rooms and elevator access to the stage.

At the grand reopening event Mayor Glover told the audience of hundreds, "This is a prized institution, and we appreciate the fact that you have entrusted the restoration and renovation of this historical building to us."

The current project was funded by approval of a bond issue by the taxpayers of the City of Shreveport. Renovations cost about \$6 million.

## Mavericks Host ABA Championship Finals



Shreveport-Bossier Mavericks earned the ABA power rank of #1.

The Shreveport-Bossier Mavericks beat the Jacksonville Giants in overtime during the ABA National Championship Finals, April 14. This was Shreveport-Bossier's first time to host the finals. Play-off competition was April 10-15.

The eight teams at the top of the ABA Power Rankings competed in the play-offs. The other teams that played include: Jacksonville Giants, South Florida Gold, The Bay Area Matrix, Arizona Scorpions, The Chicago Steam, North Dallas Vandals, and Jersey Express. The Shreveport-Bossier Mavericks earned the ABA's power ranking of #1, winning all regular season games.

Competition was expected to be fierce heading into the Final Four, especially between the Mavericks and the Giants. The Mavericks and the Giants, ranked # 1 and #2, each earned a spot into the Final Four for the Saturday night game. Both teams held back-to-back National Championships – the Mavericks won in 2010 and 2011, and the Giants won in 2012 and 2013 – but the powerhouses had not met at center court since the Mavericks' victory over the Giants in the 2011 playoffs.

"We are extremely proud of the season that the Shreveport-Bossier Mavericks have had and appreciate the support of our community during this year's season," said Kelly Wells, vice president of sports/tourism for the Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission. "We expect their popularity to continue to grow and look forward to our partnership with the organization."

## CONVENTION CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT
May 5	LHSAA State Boys and Girls Golf Championship
May 15-18	Strategic Air Command "SAC" Reunion
May 17	The Color Run
May 19-21	Metro Aviation Meeting
May 21-25	2014 Southwest Regional Conference – American Begonia Society
May 23	Fit for Life Weekend
May 28-30	Metro Aviation Meeting II
May 30	USA Wakeboard Collegiate Nationals
June 12-15	Lee-Speed Family Reunion
June 13-15	Kappa Kappa Psi/Tau Beta Sigma Reunion
June 13-15	MC Bush Founders Day Reunion
June 18-21	Miss Teen/Jr. Teen Princess Pageant
June 18-20	Carroll High School Reunion – Class of '56
June 20-22	Reed Family Reunion
June 25-29	Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Amicae Southern Region
June 27-29	Bunton Family Reunion
June 27-29	Ruffins Family Reunion
June 27-29	Jackson-Sherrill Family Reunion