



THE BUREAU BEAT
A Monthly E-Newsletter From The Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau
AUGUST 2009

Greetings,

We're almost there! Children and teens are back in school and the dog days of August are passing quickly. Summer is in its decline and the much-anticipated shorter days and cooler nights of fall will be here before you know it. Because of the speed of summer, the Mesa CVB staff is spending this month gearing up for a heavy fall travel season. This month and next month combined finds your bureau conducting efforts in Canada, Colorado, Illinois, Wisconsin, Oregon, Washington, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Missouri and Iowa. All told, fall is the best time of year to start planting the seed of desert warmth for folks looking to escape winter, and agents and outfitters are actively and aggressively promoting Arizona as a top travel destination.

And, this month is also a great time to gear up and learn new tactics that will come in handy as we try and impact the winter travel season. The bureau staff will be hosting two trainings for our industry partners this month – one on social media efforts and another on helping group sales managers reach further and farther with their message. If you are not aware of our industry programs, we encourage you to set up a membership on our VisitMesa.com site and view our 2009-2010 Program of Work. It's never too late to get involved and get the most out of your bureau partnership.

Sincerely,

Robert Brinton, President & CEO
Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau

INDUSTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ALLEGIAN AIRLINES ANNOUNCES NEW ROUTES; 17 DESTINATIONS NOW SERVED WITH NON-STOP FLIGHTS TO MESA

Low-cost airline, Allegiant Air, LLC, is gearing up for a busy winter tourism season adding new markets to their already impressive roster of favorite small cities across America. Beginning this October, the airline will provide non-stop, low-cost service to the following new cities: **Grand Island, Nebraska** and **Grand Rapids, Michigan**. The carrier also services Eugene, Medford and Redmond/Bend, OR; Springfield, MO; Bismarck, ND and Great Falls, MT. Service is already offered in Cedar Rapids, IA; Sioux Falls and Rapid City, SD; Missoula, and Billings, MT; Bellingham, WA; and Fargo, ND. Service is also in Peoria and Chicago/Rockford, IL. Allegiant Air is the only commercial carrier flying into Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. The airport provides a convenient alternative for passengers flying in and out of the Phoenix metropolitan area and serves as a gateway to East Valley communities including Mesa, Gilbert, Gila River Indian Community, Queen Creek and Apache Junction. Passengers arriving at Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport appreciate the ease of travel from a conveniently located baggage claim to rental cars parked just steps away from the Terminal. For route updates, the latest news and future announcements, visit www.allegiantair.com or www.phxmesagateway.org.

BUREAU NEWS:

COLLEGIATE-LEVEL GOLF PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON MESA AS HOST FOR CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

This month the city of Mesa was named host for two major collegiate golf championships. Officials from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) awarded Mesa host duties for the 2010 NCAA Division II Women's Golf Championships, May 12-15, with practice rounds beginning May 10-11, 2010. The tournament will be held at Longbow Golf Club and co-hosted by Mesa Sports Tourism & Development and Grand Canyon University. In addition, the Western Athletic Conference announced that the 2010 WAC Women's Golf Tournament will also be played at Longbow Golf Club. The Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau worked in tandem with the WAC to secure the neutral site for the event that will take place April 19-21, and will feature the teams from Boise State, Fresno State, Hawai'i, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico State and San Jose State. As most know, the tournament is the first of two WAC championships that will be played in our city next year. Earlier this year, Mesa was awarded host duties for the WAC's baseball tournament for the next three years. What does this mean for Mesa? "Nationally, Mesa is gaining recognition as a well-rounded, in-demand sports destination," said Aaron Muth, sports development manager for the Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau. "The NCAA and WAC selecting Mesa to host their championship events is just the latest testament to that fact." For more information on the coming tournaments, contact Mesa Sports & Tourism Development Manager Aaron Muth at 480-682-3650 or Aaron@visitmesa.com.

MARKETING NEWS:

Each month, hundreds of thousands of readers across the country learn about Mesa through the bureau's advertising efforts. The following publications will feature advertising placements in September. The combined circulation of these September placements is 5,121,700 readers. This list includes both advertising and advertorial sections featuring Mesa. To learn more about cooperative marketing efforts with the bureau, contact Milt Fort at Milt@visitmesa.com.

- Az Drive Guide
- Sports Events
- AAA Publications
- Horizon Travel
- Student Sports Travel
- Madden Pre-Print (AOT)
- Southwest Meetings & Events
- Allegiant Air: Sunseeker

GETTING AIRPORTS READY FOR MESA-BOUND TRAVELERS AND THEIR MANY QUERIES: Director of Marketing Milt Fort will be visiting all 17 destinations served by Allegiant Air this fall season with missions already conducted in Billings, Great Falls and Missoula, MT. The efforts include visits to all connecting airports and updating key staff in ground operations and airport directors on Mesa's offerings. Fort is supplying each airport with Mesa promotional materials including the new 2010 Mesa Map & Guide. When appropriate, additional calls are being made with media and other outlets in each market helping promote the Phoenix-Mesa connection. Upcoming missions this month include Bismarck and Fargo, ND paired with trips to Sioux Falls and Rapid City, SD. To date, Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport has served more than 680,000 Allegiant Air passengers since starting service in Oct. 2007. For more information on upcoming sales missions in these markets, contact Milt Fort at 480-682-3639 or Milt@visitmesa.com.

COMMUNICATIONS NEWS:

PRESS RELEASES:

The following press releases were distributed in August:

- MESA SPORTS & GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY TEAM UP TO HOST NCAA DIVISION II WOMEN'S GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS

SALES NEWS:

Leisure Tourism Sales: BUSY FALL BECKONS: Sales Manager Donna Cluckey has started a busy fall travel schedule beginning with Allegiant Call Center, Las Vegas Sales Mission held earlier this month. The Mesa CVB partnered with Arizona Office of Tourism for a one day training session at the Allegiant Air Call Center. This training was focused on Arizona and Phoenix/Mesa as a destination and proved to be a success with 60+ agents attending the training.

Allegiant currently has 120 agents and the Mesa CVB is considering additional trainings to better reach all the agents. While in Las Vegas, Cluckey completed sales calls to several AAA Travel Agencies meeting with more than 35 agents. Additional Allegiant Air sales missions will be conducted in September with planned missions to Eugene and Portland, OR as well as Illinois and Wisconsin. For more on upcoming missions, contact Sales Manager Donna Cluckey at Donna@visitmesa.com or 480-682-3646.

CALLING ON CANADA: This week, Sales Manager Donna Cluckey is conducting a multi-city sales mission in Western Canada with partners from Sunny Arizona. The mission includes sales calls in Calgary, Alberta; Saskatoon, Regina and Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan; Altona, Winnipeg and Brandon, Manitoba. Calls will be held at CAA agent offices and they are hosting a dinner event for WestJet agents and officials. An additional mission for other key cities in the country is planned for October with the Arizona Office of Tourism. Targeted cities for the fall mission include Toronto, Winnipeg, MB, Edmonton, AB and Vancouver, BC. For more information, contact Sales Manager Donna Cluckey at Donna@visitmesa.com or 480-682-3646.

Mesa Sports & Tourism Development: DEVELOPMENT IN DENVER: Group Sales Manager Aaron Muth will be in Denver and Colorado Springs, CO later this month on a development mission with the Phoenix Regional Sports Commission, Tucson CVB, and Greater Phoenix CVB to promote Phoenix/Mesa as a premier sports destination. Scheduled opportunities include a networking event with 40 leaders from the Olympic Sports Commission as well as meetings with the leaders and officials from Western Athletic Conference, Mountain West, Triple Crown Sports, and National Adult Baseball Association. For more information, contact Aaron Muth at Aaron@visitmesa.com or 480-682-3650.

Convention Sales: MAKING CONNECTIONS: Convention Sales Manager Pam Williams will attend the Connect 2009 Marketplace later this month in Las Vegas. This sold-out tradeshow geared to the SMERF market provides the opportunity to conduct one-on-one meetings with meetings and conference decision makers whose group size, meeting space needs and desired location, are a good fit for Mesa hotels and venues. More than 250 planners are expected in attendance and will spend three days sharing stories, creating new dynamics, redefining the business of meetings while establishing new and building existing relationships. For more information, contact Pam directly at Pam@visitmesa.com or 480-682-3664.

WEBSITE NEWS:

The following data represents website traffic for the month of July:

Requests for information: 165

Visits to web site: 51,014

Web site downloads: 7,798

Virtual VG downloads: 318

Travelocity Online Hotel Reservations: 1

Room nights generated: 3

CONCIERGE CORNER WITH GINGER ST. PIERRE, CTA & NCA Certified Concierge:

Earlier this month as I took a tour around the new Utery Mountain Regional Park (*see blog posted on 8/4/09* <http://MakeItMesa.com>) and I did what comes naturally to me as a concierge...I picked up a copy of every brochure I saw. There were 6 particular brochures that caught my eye. These 1 page (front & back) simple brochures provide illustrations and descriptions of the Plants, Birds, Mammals, Fish, Reptiles & Insects found in Maricopa County (and most of the Sonoran Desert). They are now posted online so that you can easily download and reproduce them at your guest's requests, courtesy of the Maricopa County Parks & Recreation Department: <http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/marketing.aspx> I have already made copies to hand out here at the Mesa Visitors Center, where we receive inquiries on a daily basis about these interests by our visitors. Cheers, from Go-Go Ginger (*visitor blog: <http://MakeItMesa.com>*)

SAVE THE DATE: The next **Mesa CVB Marketing Network Partnership Meeting** will be held on Friday, September 18th. See invitations for agendas, location and complete details.

MEET YOUR CVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS:



**Gary Levine, Board Chairperson, Executive Committee
General Manager, Hilton Phoenix East/Mesa**

Gary has been in Mesa since February of 2006 as general manager of the Hilton Phoenix East/Mesa. He has been on the Executive Committee of the Mesa CVB since that time and was recently been appointed Board Chair. Along with these responsibilities Gary is the Vice President of Food & Beverage for Quorum Hotels and Resorts which is the management company of his property and others across the country. He is originally from South Dartmouth, Massachusetts but most recently moved here from the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver Colorado. His residence is actually in the hotel and is very proud to be a "new" Mesa resident. Gary and his hotel support many charities in Mesa but are most proud of their association with Child Crisis Center. Gary also serves on both the Public Policy and Aviation committees of the

Mesa Chamber of Commerce. He believes that Mesa has a bright future ahead and will become a major destination in the Valley if we all continue to support industry growth in health, aerospace, aviation, travel and tourism in Mesa. Gary can be reached at glevine@hiltonphoenixeast.net or (602) 885-8851.