



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

In a down economy, there is still one way to perk up – take a budget-friendly vacation. That’s the message we are telling our customers this spring as temperatures begin to rise and plans for summer travels start to become top of mind.

For destination marketing organizations like ourselves, the most recent challenge is not selling the destination, it’s keeping Americans traveling. As travelers ourselves, we know that a vacation is one of the simplest forms of therapy. It’s one of the few activities where distractions are allowed, acting like a child is encouraged, televisions can turn off and for a moment in time, life is good.

This summer, your Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau is reigniting its annual Values section on the website. Here, guests can review numerous offers in a variety of categories including discounts on greens fees, two-for-one specials on dining and attractions, and view all the summer hotel rates and specials offered during the summer months. Starting next week, the site will feature three budget-friendly vacation itineraries displaying how a family of four can in fact have fun in a down economy. In addition, guests can download a document called *Summer Travel Tips* showcasing ways to get the most value out of their stay in Mesa with examples like planning the vacation around the first Sunday of a month to take advantage of free activities or choosing restaurants where kids can eat free.

New this year, the bureau is giving out Mesa Money! This voucher program will provide your guests a \$10 credit for every night they stay in your hotel this summer. We already have nine hotels participating and hope more will join us as their summer marketing plans are finalized. This program along with our Values website will be heavily promoted starting next month as part of a three-month, statewide regional marketing campaign. We are also taking the Values message on the road, telling potential visitors in other parts of this state that Mesa is a great bargain when staying in the Valley. Our staff will be hitting the Arizona highways conducting radio remotes and giveaways in an effort to generate buzz for our many Mesa hotels, attractions and related businesses.

So, this summer, let’s all try and prioritize a respite from the daily grind and consider pumping much-needed tourism dollars into our local communities and statewide destinations via a vacation. Travel is integral to everything we do. It’s only fitting that we, too, reap the benefits of a vacation and sit back and enjoy the activity we work so hard to sell every day.

Sincerely,
Robert Brinton, President & CEO
Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau

BUREAU NEWS:

CACTUS LEAGUE SETS ATTENDANCE RECORD WITH 1.5 MILLION FANS

The 2009 Cactus League season brought in an overwhelming new record for total attendance. The season rounded out with just over 1.53 million baseball fans, compared to last season’s high count of just 1.32 million. Mesa’s beloved Chicago Cubs came out on top again as the most watched team in the league with a total of

203,105 fans at their 19 games, setting a single-season record. The World Baseball Classic brought in an additional 47,483 baseball fans and added a week to the season giving almost every team in the league an additional game. The Cactus League also welcomed two newcomers from Florida this year, the Los Angeles Dodgers and Cleveland Indians, who brought out total crowds of 131,134 and 99,825 respectively.

TIME TO CELEBRATE – MESA CVB 25th ANNIVERSARY THIS WEDNESDAY!

It's not too late to get your ticket to A Toast to Tourism, held April 22 at Toby Keith's I Love This Bar & Grill. Like any great party, guests will be treated to live entertainment, signature food, cocktails, prize giveaways and a souvenir amenity. There is even some line dancing planned and a fun chance to play dress up with your friends! To learn more about the Toast to Tourism event, or to order your tickets now, call the Mesa CVB at 480-827-4700 or download a Ticket Request Form at www.VisitMesa.com/Celebrate.

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 May. The combined circulation of these placements is 1,994,330 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.

- Arizona Drive Guide 150,000
- Group Tour Magazine 16,530
- Natural History Magazine 250,000
- Phoenix Magazine 68,800
- Prep Traveler 26,000
- Sports Events Magazine 16,000
- Student Group Tour 15,000
- Sunset Magazine 1,452,000

COMMUNICATIONS NEWS:

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT THE MESA CVB AT AZCENTRAL.COM

This month, the Communications team helped produce an 8-page feature section on the Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau that wrapped the April 15 edition of The Mesa Republic. The section was part of the marketing efforts promoting the bureau's 25th Anniversary. Numerous columns and sidebars touted not only the bureau's success at marketing Mesa over the past two decades, but featured the many industries that help shape Mesa's tourism industry. Click [Here](#) to view the many stories featuring Mesa tourism-related businesses. To request a complimentary print version of this section, contact Ginger St. Pierre at Ginger@VisitMesa.com or 480-682-3666. Copies are also available at the Visitors Center at 120 N. Center, just north of Main Street in downtown Mesa.

SALES NEWS:

NEW SERVICE FOR PARTNERS TO POST THEIR DEALS ON VISITMESA.COM ALL YEAR LONG

Similar to the Arizona Office of Tourism's travel deals online service, the Mesa CVB is now encouraging Tourism Partners to post their deals and offers anytime they see fit. The new service, offered at www.visitmesa.com/newdeals, features a form that the partner simply needs to fill in. Once completed and submitted, the Bureau will post that special on the website. The special offer or deal will allow for expiration dates and be automatically removed once the special or discount offer is over. For more information on the Visit Mesa New Deals program, contact Gayle Savo at Gayle@VisitMesa.com or 480-682-3682.

CVB DATABASE & WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS: Director of Sales James Tevault attended the Destination 3000 database conference last month held in Florida. The Mesa CVB is the first Destination 3000 client to implement the Outlook trace functionality to better track the bureau's activities with clients and Industry Partners. Several additional enhancements were featured at the conference and will soon be implemented. In addition, James

and Gayle Savo will be attending the Simpleview conference later this month in Tucson. Simpleview hosts the bureau's website, VisitMesa.com, and will be unveiling new services available to the bureau in the new fiscal year. The Mesa CVB is currently working on updating website content and increasing Mesa's key search words or search engine optimization via hyperlinked copy. This improvement on the site will help Mesa and tour partners pull higher on search engine queries such as Google and Yahoo. In addition, the bureau is looking at adopting several Web 2.0 practices on the website.

Leisure Sales: AAA STILL HOT FOR SUNNY ARIZONA: Leisure Group Sales Manager Donna Cluckey, along with partners Chandler Tourism and the Tempe CVB, hosted 12 travel agents this April to a packed tour of Mesa offerings. The agents were treated to an Apache Trail Jeep Tour and visits to Goldfield Ghost Town, Rancho de Tia Rosa and the AZ Museum of Natural History. This is the last Sunny AZ fam tour planned this fiscal year. For updates or to learn more about the 2009/2010 Sunny Arizona marketing efforts, contact Donna Cluckey at Donna@VisitMesa.com or 480-682-3646.

Leisure Sales: TRAVEL COMMUNITY UPDATED ON MESA OFFERINGS: Donna Cluckey and James attended AOT's Quarterly Roundtable meeting in Flagstaff earlier this month. AOT and statewide DMOs discussed the 2009/2010 Program of Work and Mesa will continue to partner with the AOT on several activities. Key leisure markets for Mesa CVB will remain US, Canada, and depending on budget, the bureau is considering marketing to Mexico. For updates or to learn more about the 2009/2010 marketing efforts, contact James Tevault at James@VisitMesa.com or 480-682-3635.

WEBSITE NEWS:

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

Requests for information: 252

Visits to web site: 51,581

Web site downloads: 19,552

Virtual VG downloads: 1,071

Travelocity Online Hotel Reservations: 18

Room nights generated: 63

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

CATCH SPRING FEVER BEFORE IT'S OVER

Get out, before it gets too hot! Here are a few of the special community events to visit before the heat becomes unbearable. A few of these events pause for the summer months and will resume in October, when the temperatures become more reasonable for outdoor activities. For more event suggestions visit,

www.visitmesa.com/calendar

- 2nd Friday – Downtown Mesa Fabulous Friday Night Out (event held all year) www.downtownmesa.com
- 4th Friday – Mesa Riverview Art Walk (4/24, 5/22) www.eastvalleyartguild.com
- Every Saturday – Mesa Arts & Culture Festival "MACFest" (thru May 30th) www.mesaartscenter.com
- 1st Wednesday – Chandler Art Walk (held monthly, except July) www.downtownchandler.com
- 3rd Thursday – Glendale's That Thursday Thing (4/16, 5/21) www.visitglendale.com
- 1st & 3rd Fridays – Artlink Fridays, downtown Phoenix (event held all year) www.artlinkphoneix.com
- Chihuly: The Nature of Glass & Spring Butterfly Exhibit - Desert Botanical Garden (special engagements thru 5/31) www.dbg.org

SAVE THE DATE: CORRECTION FROM LAST BUREAU BEAT: The Mesa CVB Marketing Network Partnership Meeting will be held on Friday, May 15. See upcoming invitation for location and additional information.



MEET YOUR CVB STAFF: Donna Cluckey, Leisure Group Sales Manager

Donna joined the CVB in April 2005 bringing with her more than 20 years experience in the travel industry and a passion and enthusiasm for Mesa. As Leisure Group Sales Manager, Donna's primary role is to promote Mesa to tour operators and travel agents across the United States and Canada. She attends conferences, trade shows, and sales missions several times a year promoting Mesa and our incredible offerings. Donna has been a resident of Arizona for 16 years when her husband and three children traded Illinois weather for Arizona sunshine. Her favorite thing to do is spend weekends at the lake or on the back of her motorcycle enjoying Arizona's unmatched scenic beauty.