Washington Gets Stadium Trolleys

by Jerry Miller; General Manager, Old Town Trolley Tours and DC Ducks of Washington DC

When Ed Swift IV told me that we were getting ten stadium trolleys this year, I had no idea what all it entailed. I looked at Molly Trolley’s website, saw the pictures and remember thinking, “Okay, somewhat impressive.” Having only been in the trolley business since November, I really couldn’t appreciate Ed’s enthusiasm, but I still had to create the excitement and anticipation with my CAST.

Then those B3s (Big Beautiful Babies) started rolling in and BAM! It hit me! These vehicles are absolutely incredible with their eco-friendly bio diesel engines, 39’ length, 13’4” height, 53-seat capacity, 4-level seating to raise our guests above street obstructions, panoramic views, extra leg room, comfortable padded seats, back-up cameras…and let’s not forget the graphics.

The Beautiful Graphics

What a talent our designers have!! Covering the back 1/3 of each side of the four vehicles received so far are:

- The Marine Corps War Memorial (the “Iwo Jima Memorial”)
- An adorable Panda, representing the National Zoo
- An African bush elephant, as seen at the Natural History Museum
- Martin Luther King Jr., as he appears at his memorial
- Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson, as at their memorials
- Historic aircraft which can be seen at the Air and Space Museum
- The Capitol Building

Preparing to Put the B3s into Service

Before guests could step aboard and be thrilled by the comfort and view afforded by the B3s, there has been and continues to be a lot of preparation. Conductors must upgrade their CDL license to a class B with air brake endorsement. This is a tedious process of training, practice, and testing. The three licensing jurisdictions each have peculiarities. Some industrious conductors have gotten around the three to four month wait for a test date by calling offices of the DC Mayor and their councilman. One by one, conductors are learning the joys of piloting the B3s…whose driver’s seat is forward of the front wheels! The word is out: they’re cool to drive!

Other preparations have included measuring and testing underpasses and tunnels. The tour route was modified to avoid a nasty turn. The US Capitol Police had to see the vehicles and become comfortable with letting them onto The Hill. Tree limbs and branches were examined; it was determined that the B3s were only suited for our Orange Line (downtown) tour; they work also for our night tour. The uptown Green Line tour has low trees and tunnels.

A version of the pre/post-trip form suited to the B3s was created as well as a new witness form. Additionally, our maintenance department is updating its procedures, practices, and skill sets.

Contrary to popular opinion, being General Manager doesn’t come with a lot of perks, so when they do come along, I will take full advantage of them. I was fortunate enough to be on the inaugural tour on Saturday, June 8. Trolley #348, driven by conductor/trainer, Michael Hart, made its debut tour to a packed trolley of enamored guests. When we wheeled into Union Station, with the HUGE elephant graphic on one side and the Jefferson Memorial on the other, people took notice. Several reps from our competition pulled...
There is an old, poetic parable that goes something like this:

For the want of a nail the shoe was lost
For the want of a shoe the horse was lost.
For the want of a horse the rider was lost.
For the want of a rider the battle was lost.
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.

I always marvel at the simplicity of parables and how so few words can contain so much wisdom. Of course, this is the holy grail for any writer, to say the most in the least amount of words. Blessedly for me and you the reader, I am limited here to just a few comments.

In any event, the meaning behind this parable is that, “God (or the devil, depending on your point of view) is in the details.” This applies to just about everything I can think of that I have experienced in my life and certainly applies to our industry concerning travel and tourism.

No one can debate that we have some of the most extraordinary historical attributes in America, especially in the cities in which we operate. You cannot walk the streets of Key West, or Boston, or any of our cities and not be mesmerized by the profusion of historic sites or beautiful vistas, the likes of which exist nowhere else on earth. The reason we have chosen where we live attest to maybe the weather or the history but, most importantly, the people of our chosen community. We have it all. We have it all and we have chosen, as the mainstay of our livelihoods, to show it off to others by making ourselves the experts to show off these visitor destinations. Frankly, having been in the business of doing just that for the past 35 years, I find it a lovely way to make a living. Having the joy and the pride of showing off one’s community is a gift on many levels.

Then again, how many times have you seen visitors not being treated the way you would like to be treated when you are somewhere else? Perhaps the reason is we take more notice of service when we are somewhere else but we tend not to take so much notice of it in our own community. With all we have, we still need to remember it is a very competitive business. We may not lose it “for the want of a nail”, but we could for the want of a smile!

Every day, and I do mean every day, as I move about Key West and our other cities when I travel, I see people standing on street corners with a piece of paper in their hand and a quizzical look on their face. The paper is a map and they are lost. It may be momentary but, for that moment, they are in a strange place and need assistance. In the same vein, how many times do we walk by people taking photographs of their friends or family without a second thought? Unfortunately, it happens all too often. For we, like everyone else, are caught up with our problems, our agendas or just things that we are about doing. The truth of the matter is, however, that our business is the visitor to our city. The economy that pays for rent, mortgages, groceries, gas and clothes comes from our visitors. If we want them to have a good time, tell other people about our community and return ... and let’s be selfish here, spend money which is the very means by which we make our living ... then we need to be more mindful of extending the hand of friendship to our “guests”.

Where do you go back? Do you go back to places where people can’t remember your name or treat you like a number? Do you go back to places where people are rude, self-absorbed and disinterested in you? Of course not. You go back to places where people are happy, welcoming, friendly and are interested in you not as a customer but as a guest.

The object of what we should do EVERY DAY is to be available and proactively go up to people looking at maps and ask if they need help, offering to take photographs of an entire family so that everyone is in the same picture, or just being a smiling face. The answers to, “Where’s the nearest ATM?”, “What time is Sunset?”, “Where’s a pharmacy?” or “How far is it to the Hemingway House?” “Where is Boston Common?” are simple things but important. I am absolutely convinced this does more for our business today and far into the future than any money we could spend on advertising or bricks and mortar projects.

All for the Want of a Nail, The Kingdom was Lost...
or was that a Smile?

by Chris Belland; CEO of Historic Tours of America

Christopher Belland
Chief Executive Officer

Given recent budget cuts passed on to the National Park Service, Historic Tours of America CEO, Chris Belland, was invited to introduce two of sixteen White Papers from the National Park Hospitality Association on “New Sustainable Supplementary Funding for America’s National Parks” at the Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington DC on March 19th. Also present at the presentation were National Park Service Director, Jon Jarvis and Senator Mark Udall who also spoke on ways of protecting “America’s best idea”, the National Parks of the United States of America.
Attack on Boston
by Ed Swift III; President of Historic Tours of America

It’s strange that when you are involved personally in an historic event it somehow doesn’t fully register in the moment.

Chris Belland, Ed Swift IV, Christian Belland and I arrived in Boston on the day after the Boston Marathon bombing and left just after a perpetrator was apprehended in a back yard boat.

During our last full day the Governor of Massachusetts pretty much closed down the City of Boston as we left the city to visit a trolley factory in Maine. Upon our return we witnessed a truly historic moment. At 4PM on a Friday afternoon at the Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum site on the Congress Street Bridge there was not one pedestrian or one vehicle passing by.

I walked slowly to the end of the bridge and shot a photograph (pictured here) across the intersection to the Federal Reserve building. Earlier in the morning there had been a small army of soldiers in fatigues and armed with assault rifles surrounding the building. Now even those were gone.

It truly was like a ghost town, really spooky. All the restaurants were closed. Chris reasoned that with people stranded in the hotels they must be feeding them so we went over to the Intercontinental and while there were two people sitting at an outside table talking, we saw no one else. When we opened the side door, however, we quickly saw that the restaurant was up and running and was about half full. A welcome site. After dinner, Ed IV, Chris, Christian and I walked the three and a half blocks to our hotel, (which had no restaurant). We saw two people and two cabs along the way.

So what was particularly historic in this moment? As I thought about it later that evening and then talked about it the next day I began to ask people this question. Are you aware of any other time in your lifetime that a major metropolitan city has been virtually shut down? No business open, no cabs, no transit, no one on the sidewalk and no one sightseeing or even driving around. Even after 9/11, New York City remained open and people not in the immediate area went to work, drove their cars and walked the streets. This moment, this day, this reaction to events may be unique in our history. Even after a terrible natural disaster like Hurricane Andrew people were out and around right after the storm.

It later on occurred to me that many of those caught up in the events of the Boston Tea Party might not have understood that they were participating in or witnessing an epic moment, a pivotal turning point in our national history. Reflecting on the event, the day after, John Adams wrote in his diary on December 17, 1773.

“This is the most magnificent movement of all! There is a dignity, majesty, a sublimity, in this last effort of the patriots that I greatly admire. The people should never rise without doing something to be remembered — something notable and striking. This destruction of the tea is so bold, so daring, so firm, intrepid and inflexible, and it must have so important consequences, and so lasting, that I can’t but consider it as an epocha in history!” John Adams

His reaction to the event was on point. While I currently cannot say why this event, besides its uniqueness given the entire city stopped functioning, will reverberate down through our history. Does our reaction signal something in our society; is it the beginning of a series of such events? Of course I don’t know the answer.

One thing I do know in talking to our CASTmembers in Boston and reading and hearing of the collective response of the residents of the city is that they have grown even stronger and raised their voices in unison and mourned together the death and suffering brought upon them by the indiscriminate and cruel actions of two young men. The residents of Boston have shown the gritty cooperation and community solidarity that may in some way have filtered down through the years from the Tea Party and its aftermath.

Boston’s seminal role in the American Revolution and the hardships delivered upon the people of that working port city in the 18th century certainly produced a determined population. If there is some silver lining in all of this it is the sense of community and camaraderie caused by the bombing. Or perhaps those feelings were always there just under the surface and only needed a reason to come to the surface.

Being in town during the days after the bombing it was interesting to see that the Governor’s request to “stay in place” was acquiesced to by the public at large who seemed to accept the inconvenience with an unsurpassed grace, tolerance and shared purpose.
BOSTON Old Town Trolley Tours is “BOSTON STRONG”
by Matthew Murphy, General Manager

How do I begin to describe the rollercoaster of emotions that our operation (and our entire city) has been through over these last couple of months? The bombings at the Boston Marathon finish line comprised an event so shocking and disorienting that it was hard to comprehend at first that it had actually happened. (And if you’ve never experienced in person the sheer joy and exuberance of the Boston Marathon, it’s hard to understand how utterly obscene it was to have this universally loved event marred by violence and carnage.) Some of us had friends and neighbors that were directly affected.

Three people were killed in the blasts, including eight year old Martin Richard, who lived in my neighborhood of Dorchester; Kristie Campbell was a longtime restaurant manager at Summer Shack (a close industry partner of both Old Town Trolley and the Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum) and was known for her dazzling smile and amazing work ethic; and Lu Lingzi, a Chinese national studying mathematics and statistics at Boston University. Sean Collier, a brave and respected MIT police officer, was killed only days later, in a confrontation with the alleged terrorists. And then there were the 264 people that were treated at 27 area hospitals, many of whom permanently lost limbs.

The few days following the attack were surreal. Helicopters hovered over the Back Bay area constantly. Media trucks and military vehicles were parked up and down Huntington Avenue, Arlington Street, and Charles Street. Heavily armed SWAT team and National Guard personnel were posted all around the Copley Square area, including in the lobby of the Marriott Copley Hotel, right next to our ticket sales desk. Boston was thrust into the national spotlight, and I believe we all collectively breathed a huge sigh of relief when the second bombing suspect was captured, alive, in Watertown. The fear and anxiety that gripped the city in the days immediately after this senseless act of terror were high, but those feelings did not outpace the sense of courage and solidarity that arose amongst Bostonians in the aftermath.

Through all of these events, the CAST of Old Town Trolley Tours of Boston showed what they were really made of. They leaned on each other for support. They “put on a good face” (difficult though it was) for those visitors that were still here and who still wanted to see Boston’s sights in spite of Marathon Monday’s act of terror. Our CASTmembers remembered that now more than ever, our job was to make people happy, and to leave visitors with a positive experience of this beautiful and historic city. (And I can personally attest to having talked to scores of runners who expressed their gratitude that Old Town Trolley remained up and running during that week.) It wasn’t easy, as many of us were still feeling such raw emotions: fear, anger, grief, disillusionment. I cannot adequately express my personal gratitude to each and every member of our CAST, for the grace, determination, and sincere caring that you displayed during this difficult time. You are all remarkable, and I am deeply proud of you. “BOSTON STRONG” has become a convenient – and accurate – shorthand term for the particular combination of toughness, compassion, and resilience that has been on display here in recent weeks. And it certainly applies to the CAST of Old Town Trolley Tours of Boston.

What has been equally remarkable, as the days have passed since that Marathon Monday, is the way in which Boston as a whole has come together in strength and solidarity. All of the law enforcement officials that worked tirelessly on the case have provided a model for how to handle this type of crisis (and God forbid that any more such events occur). Makeshift memorials in Copley Square have provided Bostonians with an opportunity to grieve and pay respects to those that were killed or injured in the bombings. Mayor Menino and Governor Patrick established the “One Fund Boston” that has raised millions of dollars to directly benefit the victims of the attack. Hotels and restaurants along Boylston Street (where the finish line is located) have re-opened, and both tourists and Boston residents have flocked to the area in recent weeks, showing their support and sending a strong message that this great city will indeed rebound from that malevolent, indescribable act of violence.
In closing, I can say from my personal standpoint that after everything we’ve been through, I truly sense a spirit of hope and renewal in Boston. Springtime has never looked more beautiful, as the tulip trees and magnolias have burst into bloom. The Red Sox got off to a good start, and were even in first place (for a while). And the trolleys, in recent weeks, have been filling up with happy, excited guests, eager to have a good time and learn about the city’s fascinating history and culture. If anything, there seems to be a deeper appreciation of what we have here in this magnificent city, and an even greater sense of pride in who we are as Bostonians.

Cruise Ships, Irish Dancing, Blueberry Muffins and More!

by John Welby; Operations Manager

March started off with a trip to Miami for the annual cruise shipping Miami conference, also known as Seatrade. It was a welcome escape from the great white north during one of our snowiest winters in recent history. The conference was held at the Miami Beach Convention Center. It is three days of networking, networking, networking! Everyone who is anyone in the cruise ship industry attends the show. Although we don’t typically acquire new business as a result of this show, it does give us the opportunity to make new contacts and to solidify the relationships we already have. It was great to meet so many people as passionate about the cruise industry as I am. All in all the show was a big success.

March is normally still considered a slow month for Trolleyworld here in Boston and it was certainly living up to that reputation until the 24th anyway. From March 24th to the 30th, Boston hosted the World Irish Dancing Contest. This event is considered by many to be like the “Super Bowl” of the dance world and attracts nearly 7,000 dancers competing in various categories. It is estimated that 17,000 hotel rooms were booked for this event and the greater Boston area received an economic impact of approximately $11 million. Old Town Trolley Tours of Boston saw huge increases in ridership that week. The best thing about Trolley Tours of Boston is that we are a part of it all. We provide shuttles to the hotels, provide shuttle service to and from the convention center, provide shuttle service to and from the airport, and provide shuttle service to and from the various venues. We also opened a booth inside Quincy Market in the area known as the Rotunda. We had previously operated a booth in that location for many years, but had lost it some time ago. We are back in the Rotunda with a brand-new shiny booth manufactured at Molly Trolley Corporation in Maine. The booth is in a great location in the center of the very busy food court dining area. Here’s a picture of it in the trolley barn, newly signed and waiting to be brought to Quincy Market.

New Booth in Quincy Market

On Friday, April 5th, our Director of Group Sales, Leslie Nagy, asked me if we could add a charter for the following Tuesday morning. The charter was to be your basic tour of Boston. Not wanting to have to re-do the entire schedule which was already posted, I told her I would do it. Well, actually I told her I would do it after I found out who it was for, which was my favorite television station………..HGTV! I watch that channel almost exclusively. If there is a twelve-step program for people with an addiction to HGTV that definitely apply to me! In my sixteen years of working for Old Town Trolley, I was never so excited to be giving a tour as I was for this one. I couldn’t wait to find out what HGTV was doing in Boston. Over the
next three days came I to the conclusion that they must be doing their next version of “Urban Oasis” here. For those of you not familiar with the show, Urban Oasis is when HGTV acquires a luxury condo in a great location, redecorates and gives it away to a lucky viewer. The pick-up was to be at the W Hotel and I knew they had luxury condos there as well, so it made perfect sense to me.

Wanting to make this the best tour possible, I relied on my tested and true approach: bribe them with baked goods! Since it was to be an 8:00 am pick up I didn’t want to make anything too heavy from my baked goods repertoire, so I decided on blueberry muffins. But, these would not be your average blueberry muffins, they would be the best. I used the recipe from the famous Boston department store, Jordan Marsh. Growing up with ten siblings in the house money was always tight and my folks didn’t often splurge on things that weren’t a necessity. However, no matter what, if my mother went downtown to go shopping, she always came home with the most incredible blueberry muffins from Jordan Marsh. Thankfully, my mom acquired that recipe at some point and shared it with her kids.

The day of the charter arrived and I was totally prepared for it. I arrived at the W Hotel to pick up the group armed with two dozen muffins and a “Box of Joe” from Dunkin Donuts. I met with the producer Beth and the guy in charge, Jack. They confirmed my guess about the next Urban Oasis being in Boston. The cameramen rigged the trolley with cameras and put a microphone on me. I greeted the group and surprised them with the muffins and coffee. You would have thought I gave them a million dollars.....works every time! For the next two hours I was in heaven telling folks from my favorite network about my awesome hometown. I’m pretty sure they had a good time as well because they insisted on having their picture taken with me when I dropped them off. They told me the show will air on August 30th. Don’t forget to set your DVR!

 greater boston concierge association annual trade show

On April 23rd the Greater Boston Concierge Association held their annual trade show at the Black Falcon Cruise Terminal. Everyone in the hospitality industry in Boston, from restaurants to museums to tour operators is represented at this event with a display table. Several hundred attendees mingled, networked and sampled food from numerous Boston restaurants. Dozens of prizes were raffle off to the lucky attendees. Old Town Trolley was well represented at the event. Vendor Reps Cathy Hutchinson and Beth Cohen worked really hard to make OTT shine. They created a gift basket to be raffled off, they set-up the display, staffed our booth and did a phenomenal job of representing Old Town Trolley Tours of Boston.

ode to our hoteliers

by Beth Cohen; Account Manager-Vendor Sales

As you’ve no doubt heard, Boston was rocked by two bombs that exploded on Monday April 15th. This was Marathon Monday in which runners from all over the world were running in the 117th Boston Marathon. The bombs went off near the finish line of the marathon. The Lenox Hotel, whose employees are longtime supporters of Old Town Trolley Tours, sits a few hundred yards away from the finish line. Luckily none of the hotel employees were injured and the damage to the hotel was minimal – a shattered window and broken revolving door mechanism.

However, due to the hotel’s proximity to the bombing sites, the Lenox became the headquarters for the investigators, police officers, state troopers, Homeland Security staff, agents of the FBI, the Secret Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Each of the 214 rooms was occupied by the investigators. Since the hotel was providing meals for up to 400 at a time, they quickly ran through their supply of food. In true hospitality spirit, other hotels and restaurants came to the rescue with donations of food. The manager of the Fairmont Copley Plaza donated cases of bacon and sausage. The Colonnade manager delivered pasta and potato salad. The manager of the Four Seasons contributed a variety of foods. Several local restaurants also provided food for those staying at the Lenox including Eastern Standard, Island Creek Oyster Bar, Stella, Smith & Wollensky, and Towne Stove and Spirits. Also, the Lindt chocolate shop in the hotel offered chocolates to everyone.

During this time, the hotel was staffed by about 70 of their managers and employees who donated their time to clean and cook. As reported in the Boston Globe, “the officers and agents started leaving cash on the tables, telling managers to give the money, amounting to a few thousand dollars, to employees who were temporarily put out of work by the bombing. The workers’ response: Donate it to the One Fund* for bombing victims instead.” It is amazing to see how everyone pulled together to help each other out after the horrific events of April 15, 2013. Boston is slowly but surely returning to “normal” and we here at Old Town Trolley Tours are looking forward to our city fully recovering and to a busy tourist season.

*The One Fund is a charity established by Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick and Boston Mayor Thomas Menino to help those most affected by the tragic events that occurred in Boston on April 15, 2013. If you’d like to donate to the One Fund, please visit the website onefundboston.org.
Oh What a Month!
by Cathy Cathy Hutchinson; Vendor Sales Account Manager

Oh what a crazy, busy month we’ve had in vendor representative world in Boston. We’ve had to switch all of our many vendors from winter rates to summer rates and get them to sign new contracts. We also had to get the brand new maps out to not only all of our Boston vendors but to many vendors located in towns within a thirty-five mile radius. Throw in two concierge events, two bombings, and a city wide lockdown and you can imagine our month.

On April 9th we threw an event at Harpoon Brewery and Beer Hall for our vendors and hotel staff. Michael Chandler, our Sales Manager, arranged the party with our Old Town Trolley Tours advertisers, Harpoon Brewery and Sal’s Pizza. Harpoon Brewery and Beer Hall served our guests fifteen kinds of beer on tap that is brewed on the premises while Sal’s Pizza provided them with the best pizza in all of Boston. Chris Belland was the surprise guest of the evening. Our vendors enjoyed meeting and talking with the CEO of Historic Tours of America. The Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum also joined us in the festivities and provided tea for the vendors swag bags. Over two hundred vendors and hotel staff turned out. Weeks later and the vendors are still talking about that night. You can’t go wrong with Harpoon Beer and Sal’s Pizza!

Marathon Monday, the start of Boston’s Season. People worldwide look forward to this event. This year was different with the bombings. Three of our vendor hotels, the Mandarin Oriental, the Lenox, and the Charlesmark sit right near the finish line on Boylston Street. Fortunately, while the hotels suffered damage, none of the hotel employees were injured. Talking to them you know they were scared but that Boston will be OK. Boston Strong.

The Greater Boston Concierge Association (GBCA) threw their annual trade show at the Black Falcon Cruise Terminal on April 23rd. Anybody who is anybody in the business comes to the trade show to check out what is going on in Boston and to catch up with old friends. There is plenty of food, drink, raffles, and many businesses involved in the tourist trade. Old Town Trolley Tours, Ghosts & Gravestones, and the Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum had booths with info on what we are offering in the coming season. OTT has a brand new table top display designed by Black Dog. It really added some pizazz to our table. This is the event all concierges say they can’t miss and look forward to all year long.

Torrent of Training Plus
“Wheelchair Wednesdays”
by Sue Pye; Safety Training Officer

Hello from the company’s northernmost city! Spring has finally arrived here in Boston. The sun has been out and the trees and plants are budding. It is a great time to be in beautiful Boston. I am still training conductors up here at a record clip, and we are working toward our goal of having at least 55 conductors on staff for the season… and it looks like we’re going to make it! March’s class of Lauretta

“Stella Dora” Strouble, Giovanni Pantaleo, Mitch “Mission Hill Mitch” Hilton and John “Jonzie” Funke are hard at work getting their tours ready for certification. Yes, the torture continues. John, Giovanni and Mitch all passed their CDL Test with flying colors. Lauretta came with her CDL so she got to avoid the much of the range time.

The April class brought us four more people, and three folks in this class have their CDLs so only one has been spending time at the range. Welcome to Donny “Bailey” Little, Michael “Foxtrot” Long, (amazingly, we actually have two Michael Long’s now, Foxtrot and our veteran Miles, who has been giving tours for a couple of years now) Denis “Atticus” Mullan and Debbi “Carla Swan” Duncanson. I don’t do all the training alone so a huge THANKS to Michael “Bear” Giobbe, John “Irish” Feeley, Jeff “Pilgrim” Semeraro, Richie “Buzz” Sheridan, Ken Queale and John Welby for all their help. If I forgot anyone it is not because your efforts are not appreciated but rather that I goofed. These guys are so very helpful, and our coordinated efforts insure that our trainees are getting the best training possible.

On the Safety Front, I know that we have the best conductors ever. April presented many challenges here in Boston with the terrible incident on Patriot’s Day. Our conductors being the pros that they are, they went with the flow. From keeping their cool amidst the craziness due to the Marathon both before and after the bombings, to seamlessly changing our tour route to accommodate the street closings in the Back Bay, I haven’t been able to thank them enough so I am taking this opportunity to do so now.

We also recently started “Wheelchair Wednesdays,” an exciting new training routine that is helping to keep all our conductors sharp on how to safely and properly operate our hydraulic wheelchair lifts. This is an activity that has been embraced by the conductors much better than I could have hoped. Every Wednesday after fueling (Wednesday is one of our regular fueling days) the conductors pull our new training item now, to insure that all our conductors stay practices and ready to properly serve our wheelchair-bound guests.

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The USS Constitution Museum is one of our newest advertisers, but is a longtime friend of ours. The gift shop inside the museum sells a boatload (so to speak) of trolley tickets, and the museum itself collects, preserves, and interprets the stories of ‘Old Ironsides’ and the people associated with her. We’re very proud to feature the USS Constitution Museum in our “Ultimate History Lover’s Package,” which also includes admission to the Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum and the Harrison Gray Otis House Museum.

The New England Spring has arrived again and with it, the beginning of the 2013 “season”. That sound you may hear is a rousing Huzzah coming from Leslie Nagy, Beth Cohen and Cathy Hutchinson. After many hours of e-mailing and phone negotiations, Leslie doesn’t have to worry that a weekend full of charters or advanced ticket sales will disappear in 18 inches of snow. Beth and Cathy spend so much of their time out of the Trolley Barn, making sales calls on their vendors, delivering maps and tickets and good will, that boots are a part of their daily dress. Seriously, how often do you carry a gallon of window washing fluid next to six cases of OTT maps on your back seat? For their daily dress. Seriously, how often do you carry a gallon of window washing fluid next to six cases of OTT maps on your back seat? For Beth and Cathy, it is just part of everyday practice.

Their hard work this past winter created one of the most successful sales winters OTT has had in several years. The introduction of the Winter Special Package (in which every OTT ticket included a free Boston Tea Party Ship and Museum admission) certainly helped the vendor program’s success; however Beth and Cathy’s years of relationship building really pushed sales over the top. That resounding success has carried beautifully into April and May. In early April we held our “Spring Fling”, the vendor event to end all vendor events. Over 270 Concierges, front desk people, Hotel Doormen and Hotel Valets crowded into the brand new Harpoon Brewery and Beer Hall, enjoyed great Sal’s Pizza, music, prizes and raffles... plus a going home Swag Bag... again Cathy and Beth’s work and relationships went a long way to assuring a great evening for Old Town Trolley and its partners. Our thanks to Sal’s Pizza (special thanks to Peter Ackerman) a multi-year advertising partner......and thanks to Harpoon Brewery and a terrific group of “Harpooners” (our appreciation to Charlie Storey for making it happen)....and to the many other OTT people and partners who did so much to create all those extra special touches...including Matthew, who did a great job as MC, John Welby for helping out with registration and networking; and to Chris Belland for taking time to say a few words and do the meet/greet thing at the end of a long day.

Leslie has spent her usual winter and early spring, talking to clients and potential clients about summer. Leslie knows much better than most about the timing and process of wedding planning. I have listened to her on many occasions talking to brides and wedding planners in January, with crazy sideways snow flying past her window, but for her and the bride it is mid-August on the Cape. Also when duty calls, she dons HER boots and becomes the Convention Center Luncheon Trolley Dispatcher (ask her, she will show you her name badge), a delightful way to spend three hours in 20 degree weather!

Everything we see in the Boston Sales group says this is going to be a terrific year for Old Town Trolley in all phases of sales. We are adding vendors; hotels under construction have agreed to sell our tickets; looking into the summer months charter and group sales seem particularly strong and of course, we have the best product and the best people....and winter is in the rear view mirror. Huzzah!

**Springtime Means Heavy Lifting in the Maintenance Department**

_by Bob Gibson; Vehicle Maintenance Manager_

Spring has sprung and it is that time of year again. Now that the wind and winter snows have gone it is time for the Herculean task of removing the window panels (some of them weighing 350 pounds) from the “winterized” trolleys, and re-installing the plastic, “isinglass” rollup panels for the warmer weather. All of our other locations should thank their lucky stars that “winter” means something very different than what it means in Boston; in our sister cities, folks should thank their lucky stars that “winter” means something very different than what it means in Boston; in our sister cities, folks become concerned if the temperature drops below 60 degrees. Here in HTA’s northernmost city, we’re happy if just stays above 16!
Anyway, the “changing of the glass” takes place twice yearly and it’s NOT FUN, but this time of year it means that we are heading into season and that’s a very good thing!

We’ve done other heavy lifting lately, too, as some new sales depots have opened. We received a brand new sales kiosk from the Molly Corporation (the same company that manufactures our trolleys), and had to haul it down to Faneuil Hall Marketplace, unload it from the back of our truck, and roll it into place inside the main rotunda of the Marketplace. No easy task, believe me, but as they say, many hands make light work.

As the weather warms up, the garage doors tend to stay open longer. Although we like having more fresh air in the trolley barn, we don’t like the fact that some of our feathered friends tend to fly in and try to create roosts up in the eaves of our facility. So we recently had to make our annual call to the folks at the “Critter Control” company, who specialize in ridding companies like ours of every type of critter imaginable: we’ve used them to remove possums and raccoons, and this time it was to rid the barn of a growing number of pigeons. The Critter Control company is very good at what they do, and I’m happy to say that our trolley barn is now pigeon-free.

Now that we’ve gotten through the winter, I want to say a special thank you to our vehicles cleaners/detailers, for all their hard work. During the winters in Boston, the trolleys really take a beating, with all the snow and ice and slush, the salt from the roads, the puddles and potholes, and so forth. It makes the job of keeping the trolleys looking good especially difficult. So I want to give a pat on the back to each of our four cleaners: Anesti Dalta, Namiq Zeqoll, Glicerio “Nacho” Menacho, and Aldwin Peredin. You guys are the best!

Old Town Trolley’s Waterfront Welcome Center recently started featuring Boston Tea Party-themed retail items in the store, along with trolley tickets. The pictures above show the new signage added on to the Welcome Center’s exterior to feature the new retail elements.

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**

**APRIL**
- Leslie Nagy, 23 years
- John Welby, 16 years
- Glicerio Menacho, 12 years
- Marc Chidley, 11 years
- Steven Johnson, 10 years
- Charlotte dore, 7 years
- John Egan, 5 years
- Paul Sullivan, 4 years
- Stephen Soverino, 4 years
- Ryan Jennings, 3 years
- Sheila O’Loughlin, 3 years
- Kris Fabroski II, 2 years
- William Munoz, 2 years
- Nicole Parrish, 2 years
- Marisol Diou, 1 year
- Samuel Joyall, 1 year
- Paul Martin, 1 year

**TEA PARTY SHIPS**
- Ted Galo, 12 years
- Kevin Casey, 8 years
- Raymond O’Hare, 4 years
- Michael Hogan 4 years
- Kristen Hagman, 1 year
- Julie Farnkoff, 1 year
- Harold Aspinwall, 1 year
- David Stickney, 1 year
- Ryan Edlinger, 1 year
- Holly Schaff, 1 year
- Jamianne Devlin, 1 year

**MAY**
- Susan Pye, 18 years
- Cathy Hutchinson, 8 years
- William St. George Jr., 6 years
- Robert Eathon, 4 years
- Rachel Coffin, 3 years
- Maureen Marotta, 3 years
- Roger Dumont, 2 years
- Marion Hunt, 2 years
- Gregory Twombly, 1 year
- Robert Sinthara, 1 year
- Jonathan Norcross, 1 year
- Geraldine Tappan, 1 year

**TEA PARTY SHIPS**
- Clifford Hilaire, 1 year
- Ethan Selby, 1 year
- Christian Masters, 1 year
- Joel Barnett, 1 year
- George Fonseca Jr., 1 year

**MARCH**
- Jeff Semeraro, Conductor
- Marion Hunt, Sales Rep.
- Katie Cunio, Supporting

**APRIL**
- Justin Moss, Conductor
- Roger Dumont, Sales Rep.
- Aldwin Peredin, Supporting
- Charlotte Dore, Actor

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**CAST Members of the Month**

- twitter.com/bostontours
- facebook.com/bostontours
Nicole Parrish
Ghosts & Gravestones

BACKGROUND

Hi! Allow me to introduce myself, my name is Nicole. I was born in Boston. Shortly after I was born, my family moved to a very small country town outside of Quincy, Illinois. It was in southwest Illinois that I grew some deep country girl roots. My father played professional baseball, and due to his constantly changing schedule, I bounced around a lot between Illinois, Florida, Texas, and Massachusetts. My mother and I settled back in the Boston area when I was five. I like to think I grew up living in the best of both worlds, experiencing city life during the school year and life on a farm during the summer. While in high school, I had the pleasure of working with the HOPE Youth Corps. Through the youth corps I was able to travel to Paris, Romania, and along the east coast of the United States, working in orphanages, group homes, and women and children’s shelters. I performed in plays, educating children in a fun way, about the importance of immunizations, diversity, and acceptance. While in Romania my group remodeled an orphanage and worked with the children on fine and gross motor skills. It was during these impressionable years that my love of traveling and experiencing all that I can in life began.

I attended UMass Boston after high school, majoring in Theater Arts and Psychology. While in school, I managed to work in the film and radio industry, mixing my love of travel, film, and promotions. After a very successful run in a show in Boston, I was offered the chance to move to California. I chose to put school on hold and pursue my career. I lived in Orange County and Los Angeles during my time in California. I worked steadily, and had some pretty cool jobs, my favorite being able to work on The Jay Leno Show. Eventually I came back to Boston and settled down.

I am currently living just north of Boston and am a very busy mother of four children, (three energetic boys, and one sweet little girl). I am a working actor in the New England area, and I just began my third season at Ghosts and Gravestones in Boston. Ghosts and Gravestones has given me the tremendous opportunity to mix acting, with teaching people the darker side of Boston’s history, all while having fun. I feel honored to work with a cast of people who are so talented and supportive of one another.

Q | What is my idea of perfect happiness?
A | My idea of perfect happiness is a beautiful, sunny day spent outside, surrounded by the people who matter most to me, and it definitely includes a lot of laughter.

Q | Which living person do you most admire?
A | I have always admired my mother. She is a strong, independent woman. My mother is selfless, sincere, and is a natural leader. I continue to learn from her, and she is one of my best friends.

Q | What is your favorite vacation spot?
A | While the beach has always been my “happy place”, I was lucky enough to travel to Brazil earlier this year with my boyfriend. We spent about a week on an island called Ilha Grande. It was breathtaking, relaxing, and the epitome of paradise. It is my favorite vacation spot to date.

Q | What do you consider your greatest achievement?
A | I believe in giving back as much as possible, therefore teaching my children to be grateful for all they have and to serve their community and those less fortunate is very important to me. When my children willingly donate toys, raise money for causes they believe in, and are active in our community, I feel as though I have instilled in them a very valuable trait. I am extremely proud to have children that genuinely care about the world they live in, and want to do what they can to make it a better place.

Q | What three things will you always find in my refrigerator?
A | Hot sauce, jalapeno peppers and shredded cheese.
WASHINGTON, DC

2013: Our “Transition Year”
by Jerry Miller; General Manager

The Washington DC operation is experiencing tremendous growth and change this year. We’re calling 2013 our “Transition Year.”

We began 2013 with remodeling our offices, lobby and briefing areas with new paint, hardwood laminate floors, furniture and fixtures. Most recently we replaced both air conditioners. Remodeling the lobby and CAST break room will follow that.

In the past, our comment cards indicated that we just didn’t have enough vehicles to accommodate the Washington DC crowds. We were being verbally spanked every day by our guests and we had to address the problem quickly, so in the first quarter of 2013, we added seven brand new stadium trolleys to our fleet. These trolleys were bigger than anything else we had at the time, or were used to. They have higher seating capacity and a much more comfortable ride. They also have eisenglass, eliminating the rattling and banging of traditional trolley windows.

On March 4, I transitioned in as General Manager. With everything else the CAST was dealing with, they now had to break in a new GM. Thankfully, I’m awesome…the best, actually…and they didn’t have to do much “breaking me in”…badumbump!

In April and May, we received the first four of ten brand new stadium trolleys. Talk about a trolley!! These babies are 13’4” high and 42’ long, and rival even our stadium vehicles. There are four levels of seating, 53-seat capacity to be exact, and will easily compete with our competition’s double-deckers. They do, however, require a class B CDL, and most of our drivers, myself included, have a class C. This quickly thrust us into another challenge of getting everyone up to snuff with their CDL.

Two weeks ago, when the new stadium trolleys arrived, we began an extensive training program to acclimate our existing class B holders to them. We also had to really examine our routes to ensure that we wouldn’t encounter any height restrictions. Finally, we began working on licensing the vehicles with the Washington Department of Motor Vehicles.

On the DC Duck tours front, last week we received our first Hydra Terra, a newer amphibious vehicle, to complement our existing Duck fleet. If everything works out with getting in and out of the Potomac, we may receive two or three more from Key West, increasing that fleet to nine to ten vessels.

With our existing trolley and shuttle bus fleet, eleven additional new trolleys and six more on the way, a newer hydra terra and possibly a few more of them on the way, we need a facility to protect our investments. Consequently, we began the planning and design stage last week of a 30,000-40,000 sq ft trolley barn, to be built next to our existing 18,000 sq ft trolley facility. The additional building, coupled with the existing building, will house our entire fleet of trolleys, shuttle buses, ducks and service vehicles, and still leave us room to move the duck operation from across the street, opening up an opportunity for some leasing revenue from that property. A lot of thought has already gone into this and we’re only a week into the process. We can’t wait to see the renderings, plans, and eventually, the final product!

With all these new vehicles, we need to ensure we have the guests to fill them, so we are currently full steam ahead with finding new revenue opportunities; including new tours, tour loops, self-operated ticket booths, hotel partners, concierge opportunities, and any other untapped areas of interest. Good things are coming….get ready for them!

To say that we are going to be incredibly busy this year is a gross understatement! However, once things calm down and we are back into our groove again, Washington DC will be a force to be reckoned with. I have an incredibly talented leadagement team as well as a frontline CAST of individuals who are genuinely dedicated and committed to the company’s success. With all of this going for us, and the investment in us by the corporate office, watch out Boston, Key West, St. Augustine, San Diego and Savannah. We intend to be the #1 location in everything that is good and positive, and #6 in everything that is…let’s say…a challenge.

“We strive to have a genuine encounter with every guest.”

C is not for Cookie, Mr Monster...C is for Character
by Eric Holmes; Operations Manager

Character - it’s what you do when you think no one is looking.

As we take a deep breath after the first wave of our 2013 – 2014 season, I ponder on the character of our CAST. What separates us
from other companies that attempt to do what we do?

Character is a hard thing to describe. In the dictionary it’s described as, “the qualities that form the individual nature of a person or a thing.” That seems to be quite a good description of it. However, that’s not the definition that I would “personally” give.

Some people will do the decent thing when they are forced to, when they are being watched, or when they want to impress their trustworthiness as a character trait on someone else. However, when no one is looking they’re a completely different person, and act in a completely different way all together. The best definition that I have heard of character is the same as the first sentence of my entry into this newsletter: Character - it’s what you do when you think no one is looking.

Think about that for a moment. Doing what is right purely and simply because it’s the right thing to do. Not to look good in front of the boss, not to score brownie points, not to suck up to someone, but simply because it is the right thing to do. Now that’s a test of character. You could be fulfilling your role as a CASTmember. It could be just a normal day, then suddenly the opportunity presents itself to put your extensive training to the test. You have the chance to make or break someone’s vacation. What do you do? The choice is yours, your character says a lot about you. Our guests judge us by what they see us do, and what they hear us say, our character is something to be nurtured and protected.

As a part of the Leadagement team for Old Town Trolley Tours of Washington, DC, I’m proud to say that I work with the best CAST of characters in the country. They turn my work days into play days. With the support from HTA, all of our hard work is paying off. To my CAST here in Washington and to the other CASTmembers across the nation remember, character – is what you do when you think no one is looking.

Fixing the Body with the Body Man Himself

by Malcolm Barton; Maintenance Manager

Mr. Mikel Godbolt was originally hired at Old Town Trolley as a contractor to perform the task of body work on trolleys and buses. Due to his outstanding work performance as a contractor for one year, we offered him a full-time position as a body work mechanic. Mikel has now been with the company for approximately four years. During this time frame, we have learned that Mikel’s abilities do not stop at just body work. He has worked on projects at the Welcome Center located in downtown Washington, D.C. His projects entailed repairing the mobile statue, fixing the lights in the building, sealing the marble counter, and replacing broken and chipped bricks outside the building. At Union Station, he has completed cabinetry and lock work on our sales booth. Mikel also performs the maintenance of different sale booths throughout the city. At the Old Town Trolley, Washington, D.C. location, Mikel has done outstanding carpentry work on the older trolleys which allows us to keep them in service. As our advertising department grows, Mikel is deeply involved with the contractors as far as advertising placement on the exterior of trolleys. He has also taken on the task of decaling all trolleys himself which is a task that he has never performed before working at Old Town Trolley.

Over the years, he has mastered this great skill. As his supervisor, I am fortunate enough to have him on my team and I look forward to working with him for many years to come. Congratulations to “Body Shop Mike” as we affectionately refer to him at the Washington D.C. location...and Abe thanks him for his ribs. BEST IN THE WORLD!!

It's a Charter Rep's Party and you and your family are invited

by Abe Burgos; Charter and Group Sales Manager

Our charter season is made and broken in April and May. We start the fiscal year strong with TEDMED, which by the way is a 60 trolley charter rental extravaganza. They decreased their order from last year.

Nation's Storyteller reader: Wait Abe, you don't have 60 trolleys in Washington DC. How did you do it Superman?

Super Abe: Well fair citizen, we did ten trolleys in the morning before our tours began. We did ten trolleys in the evening after our tours ended. And we did it over a course of three days.

As my next door neighbor said to me, TEDMED be tripping yo.

So that event starts my charter season. In May there is a 9 trolley charter. There are also 27 trolley charters on the same night. There is a total of 48 Ducks on charters in May. At the beginning of June there is a 10 trolley charter and an eight trolley charter. This gives us all practice for the biggest one day charter of them all in October.

I have been given grief by our maintenance manager Malcolm Barton.

Malcolm: Abe, you are trying to kill me? 14 trolleys on charters on one night?

Super Abe: Malcolm, you are talking to the guy who rented out our entire fleet on one morning last year. Do you think I’m sweating 14 trolleys?

Of course I failed to mention to him that on that same night I have a one trolley charter. So 15 trolleys in one night. How sweet it is to be loved by you!

April and May are by far the two busiest months in charter world. In fact, about a third of my yearly budget is made in these two months. But the true test of how good a salesperson I am comes in a few weeks, maybe even days. My goal: book a trolley of cicadas. Good luck to me!
Mommy, Where for Art Thou?
by Loletta Edwards; Head Conductor

Mother’s Day: An event every second Sunday in May, that is celebrated around the world to honor those grandmothers, mothers, aunts, and any woman who basically raised a child or children. It is celebrated by honoring mothers whose contributions are often overlooked, but never forgotten. A gift of cards, balloons, teddy bears, and carnations to women who have sacrificed so much, just to be given so little.

It all started in 1868 when Ann Jarvis - mother of Anna Jarvis - created a committee to establish a “Mother’s Friendship Day,” the purpose of which to “reunite families that had been divided during the Civil War.” She wanted to expand this into an annual memorial for mothers, but she died in 1905, before the celebration became popular.

Ann Jarvis’ daughter, Anna Jarvis, campaigned to establish Mother’s Day first as a U.S. national holiday, and then later, as an international holiday. The holiday was declared official by the State of West Virginia in 1910 and the rest of the states followed quickly.

On May 8, 1914, the U.S. Congress passed a law designating the second Sunday in May as Mother’s Day and requesting a proclamation.

On May 9, 1914 President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation declaring the first national Mother’s Day for American citizens to show the flag in honor of those Mother’s whose sons had died in war.

Carnations have come to represent Mother’s Day since Anna Jarvis delivered 500 of them at the first celebration in 1908, and every year Old Town Trolley Tours gives all mothers a carnation to help celebrate their day.

So in honor of Mother’s Day I thought I would dedicate this month’s newsletter article to the holiday celebrated around the world on May 12, 2013. So I asked a couple of mothers seven questions so we can get to know them a little better.

I started off with the woman that gave me life, my mother, Loretta Edwards. She was the youngest girl born of her siblings. Seventh of nine children, but the first one to be born in DC. She now resides in Goldsboro, NC. She is a proud mother of two girls, me and my oldest sister, who is also a mother of two.

ME: If you can have any job in the world, besides the one you are doing now, what would it be?
MOM: Vacationer
ME: Why did your parents give you your name?
MOM: Because your grandma liked Loretta Young movies.
ME: What was the best Mother’s Day gift I ever gave you?
MOM: All of them, there are so many I love. But it was really special last year when you asked me what did I want for Mother’s Day and I said to see my baby and that weekend you drove down here to see me. That was really special.
ME: What is your all time favorite movie?
MOM: Finding Nemo.
ME: If you won the lottery, what would you do with the money?
MOM: Get my own private island. No phones, just a laptop with internet and an unlimited supply of Big Fish Game coupons.
ME: Over your lifetime there have been a lot of different kinds of music, what is your favorite?
MOM: R & B Soul Classics
ME: What is your all time favorite movie?
MOM: Glory
ME: What was the best Mother’s Day gift you ever received?
MOM: When my daughter not only wanted to further her education but got into medical school.
ME: What is your all time favorite movie?
MOM: Classical
ME: What is your favorite spot in Washington, DC?
MOM: The Mary Mcleod Bethune House.

Next I interviewed Marilyn Mapp who hasn’t been with Old Town Trolley long, only one year and four months, but has already made an impact on people. She is a proud mother of two sons ages 24 and 21. She keeps me on my toes, as I surely keep her on hers.

ME: If you can have any job in the world, besides the one you are doing now, what would it be?
MARPILYAN: Just once I would like to take the job of the person who announces President Obama’s entrance to Congress for the State of the Union Address.
ME: Why did your parents give you your name?
MARILYAN: My mother worked with a woman with the name.
ME: What was the best Mother’s Day gift you ever received?
MARILYAN: My oldest son graduated from college Mother’s Day weekend.
ME: What is your all time favorite movie?
MARILYAN: Godfather I
ME: If you won the lottery, what would you do with the money?
MARILYAN: Take a trip around the world and then help people in need.
ME: Over your lifetime there have been a lot of different kinds of music, what is your favorite?
MARILYAN: Neo-Soul.
ME: What is your favorite spot in Washington, DC?
MARILYAN: Lincoln Memorial
The last mother I interviewed, this was her very first Mother’s Day. She is a new mother of Caleb born January 22, 2013. Nine hours and 51 minutes earlier, he would have shared a birthday with his mother. He came out 21 inches six pounds and nine ounces. His mother, Leah, says he is just the best baby in the world.

ME: If you can have any job in the world, besides the one you are doing now, what would it be?
LEAH: High School History Teacher
ME: Why did your parents give you your name?
LEAH: Named Lemuela after my uncle Lemuel because he sheltered my family during Liberia’s Civil War when I was born, and if it wasn’t for him I wouldn’t be here today.
ME: What was the best Mother’s Day gift you ever received?
LEAH: Caleb is the best blessing I could have ever received. He has taught me so much, opened up my heart so much in the 3 months he has been here.
ME: What is your all time favorite movie?
LEAH: Little Rascals (90’s Remake)
ME: If you won the lottery, what would you do with the money?
LEAH: Put half away for Caleb and split the rest between family, friends and loved ones.
ME: Over your lifetime there have been a lot of different kinds of music, what is your favorite?
LEAH: 90’s R & B, Neo - Soul, and anything Adele.
ME: What is your favorite spot in Washington, DC?
LEAH: Maggiano’s Little Italy Restaurant

Each of these women are exceptional in their own way. They all chose to take on the responsibility of another human life. I am not yet a mother, maybe one day I will be, but in the meantime, I just want to say thank you to all those hard working, dedicated mothers out there.

Think: Safety Is Everyone’s Job
by Stephen “Mr. Holiday” O’Brien; Safety Officer

I’m happy to admit it: I got the title for this article from a used plastic sign; one that was placed on my desk this morning by a coworker. I washed it and taped it to the side of my work station. A common desk was thus transformed into “SAFETY CENTRAL.” The point is that this occurred because someone thought about safety and about how to put a safety resource to good use. In this, my 3rd month on the job, the most uplifting thing I’ve learned is that I’m not doing this formidable job alone. Conductors, sales reps, captains and others have shared with me insights, information, and concerns that I’m elated to respond to; elated because it means I’m in a network of eyes, ears, and attentions that monitor and alter the safety environment of the WDC operation.

Discussion of this network would be incomplete without sharing the value of our recent “Loss Risk Assessment” visit by our insurer; a week that also included hours of valuable safety officer training by Jim Lamberson and Bill Meagher. I had feared the theme of the week might be “you’ve got to do 5 times more than you are” (because I know I do). Rather, it was a week of “here are the tools you need to do your job.”

Yes, safety is everyone’s job, and it’s fun to discover the different ways it’s true.
It’s Heating up in the Ticket Seller Department
by Teresa Butts; Depot Sales Manager

As summer approaches, we would like to welcome the newest members of our sales team: Latoya Crane, Jena Foreman, Leanora John-Baptiste, Miriam Pryor, Aneia Ragland, Daijah Washington, and Larry Yontz. We are starting a few new Roving sales spots that we are excited about and are hoping prove successful. Of course, when you have that many salespeople, recap proves interesting, as one room can only hold so many people before you bump into one another, but we make it work! Congrats to the Salespersons of the Month for March and April 2013: March was Anthony Sadler and April was Jaquita Smith.

Congratulations Terri!
by Leah Bryant; Director of First Impressions

We are very proud to announce the graduation of one of our First Impressionists, Terri Southern!! On Saturday, May 11, 2013 she graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of the District of Columbia Community College! Her major was in Liberal Studies with asst. in Applied Science. She will be continuing her education at the University of the District of Columbia on the Van Ness campus while pursuing a Bachelor’s in Accounting. Congrats Terri!! We are very proud of you and wish you much more success!

Movin’ On Up
by Mike Goggin; Night Operations Manager

At this time most of our tour conductors are in the process of converting their class C commercial driver’s licenses to class B with an air brake certification. This is thanks to the recent arrival of four brand new stadium trolleys that are heavier and taller and have a larger capacity than any vehicle that we have ever before put on the road in Washington, D.C. These four are the first of ten such vehicles coming our way from the Molly Trolley Corporation in Wells, Maine during the next year. It’s an amazing investment in the future of OTT-WDC!

As a Maryland resident, I am in the process of upgrading my license with the Motor Vehicle Administration in the Free State. So far the process has cost me $90 – not exactly free, but reasonable given the prospect of greater gratuities coming from these massive 53 seat vehicles.

Just recently I sat for the law test administered by the state of Maryland to obtain my air brake endorsement. The test is 25 questions long and a passing score is 20. Fortunately, I scored a 23 on my first time through the exam. It was a challenging little test that made mention of s-cam drum brakes, brake lag and alcohol evaporators, among other items. But one sees his or her score throughout the test on the left side of the touch screen, and after question 22 I knew that I was in the clear.

Next comes the issuance of a class B commercial learner’s permit, which along with my existing license now allows me to take to the streets of DC behind the wheel of a stadium trolley in the company of a properly licensed instructor. Fortunately, we have a few willing and able instructors among our current cast members so I look forward to learning the nuances of using air brakes and operating vehicles weighing more than 26,000 pounds under their tutelage in real world driving situations around town. First lesson: learn the height of our many bridges! These trolleys stand 13’4” tall.

Some time in the next six months, I’ll journey with one of these stadium trolleys to the MVA office to take a road test in it that will include a pre-trip inspection, circle check and skills demonstration including such things as alley docking, parallel parking and backing in a straight line. The back-up cameras that are standard on these new vehicles should definitely help with that final test.

Three New Improvements Decided For The National Mall
by Bob Norris; Business Manager

At Old Town Trolley of WDC, we like to spend a lot of time talking about the interesting past of Washington, D.C., but there are also many noteworthy things about its future.

On May 2nd, 2013, The Trust for the National Mall selected winning designs for three projects to improve the experience for all Mall visitors. Currently, the Mall suffers from a number of problems including cracked sidewalks, dead grass, and poor drainage. The goal of the Trust is to raise $350 million for a series of restoration and preservation projects to address this neglect and “revitalize the National Mall so it can continue to be the most prominent stage for civic activities in our nation”.

The winning design for Constitution Gardens east of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is from Rogers Marvel Architects & Peter Walker and Partners – This design can be viewed by going to www.rogersmarvel.com under Portfolio > Current Projects > Constitution Gardens.

The winning design for the Sylvan Theater southeast of the Washington Monument is from OLIN & Weiss/Manfredi – This design can be viewed by going to www.weismanfredi.com under Menu > Projects > Sylvan Grove: A New Center Stage.

The winning design for Union Square near the Capitol is from Gustafson Guthrie Nichol & Davis Brody Bond – This design can be viewed by going to www.ggnltd.com under Projects > National Mall Union Square.

Next month one of these project designs will be selected to break ground in 2014 for a planned completion in 2016.
The Willard InterContinental Hotel
by Terrie Thomas; Vendor Representative

“Welcome to the Willard InterContinental, how may I assist you?” Those were the first words I heard when I stood in front of the concierge desk. Here I am 12 years later to introduce four very special gentlemen. I asked each of them to write a little history of themselves and I would put together an article. After reading each of their bios, I couldn’t alter a single word they wrote. Over the 12 years I’ve been with OTT, I thought I knew these men but now I know a little more. With heartfelt love, allow me to introduce my dear friends from The Willard InterContinental Hotel.

Michael McCleary
I was born in Madrid, Spain. My father was in the Air Force and my mother was Swedish, so from the very start I had a multi-cultural exposure. I was raised in Spain and spent most of my life there until for work reasons I came to Washington, DC 30 years ago to start a new life and career. I chose Washington, DC primarily because my brother lived here at the time and I would have a roof over my head. After a few frustrating months trying to find a job I landed almost by accident at the L’Enfant Plaza Hotel as a front desk agent. It only took me a few weeks to realize that the job of the concierge was a lot more fun and interesting. After a few months on the job, I started working two days a week as a concierge. Soon after that a full time position became available and I grabbed it. I learned on the job with help from a more experienced concierge and by putting time and effort to learn as much as I could about the job and the city. Three years later the Willard InterContinental opened up after being closed for almost 20 years. I was there at the reopening and 27 years later am still at the beautiful and historic property. During my tenure at the Willard I became a member of Les Clefs d’Or, USA and next year will celebrate my 25 years with the organization. How much longer as a concierge? All I know is that it would be difficult to do anything else. While it is very hard work, it has given me the opportunity to experience the world in my own backyard.

Guillaume Tourniaire
I have been with the Willard InterContinental Hotel since 2005, and have previously been on the opening teams of the Ritz-Carlton, Washington DC (2000), the Sofitel Lafayette Square (2002), and the Mandarin Oriental Hotel (2004). I have also previously been a concierge in San Diego and Boston, where I began my concierge career at Le Meridien. I grew up in the hotel industry, moving often through my parent’s many assignments with InterContinental Hotels, and living mostly in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, before coming to the US in time for high school and college. Born in Thailand, with family in France, and lifelong friends in New Orleans, I now call Washington, DC home. I have previously been on the board of the Washington Area Concierge Association and a proud member of Les Clefs d’Or. My father and I have the distinction of being a rare Les Clefs d’Or father-and-son pair, as he became an honorary member while RVPO in Egypt for IHG. Fluent in French (thanks to my mother’s insistence!), I use my language skills both at work as well as in theatre projects, translating plays and operettas, and then directing them on DC area stages. I tap into my great love of the performing arts and the restaurant scene to open Washington’s vistas to my guests.

B & T Trolley Tale
by Abe Burgos; Charter and Group Sales

So in my infinite wisdom and greatness, I thought I would have this as an every once in a while column. This group interested me because Candy, the nuptial ninja, called me and asked for a charter on Easter weekend right in the middle of spring break and Cherry Blossom.

Absolutely not I replied. Mind you, they called me six weeks before the event. Most of my charters all book about 2-3 months in advance. Spring break is the busiest week of the year, and Easter weekend is the second busiest weekend of the year right behind 4th of July weekend. This is not only a sold out month for me, but it’s an absolute black out date. Under no circumstances am I allowed to book a charter for a holiday weekend during Cherry Blossom. No, No, NO!!!

Then I heard their story. Tim, the groom, and the bride, Bobbie, had to plan this wedding quickly because Tim was going to be sent to Afghanistan for his job. He’s in the military…I guess there is one circumstance.

So for this issue of the Nation’s Storyteller, I got Bobbie and Candy to write out a story about the date. Here’s the brand new every once in a while column called: “The Awesomeness Charter EVER: The Rose Wedding!”

On March 30th, Bobbie and Tim exchanged vows in Washington, DC, the city in which they met and call home. Their guests included 50 of their closest family and friends, for whom they were thrilled to showcase the nation’s capital.

Their wedding ceremony took place at the DC War Memorial, located on the National Mall. While the cherry blossoms surrounding the site weren’t in peak bloom as predicted, they couldn’t have asked for a more picture-perfect spring afternoon.

Their wedding reception was held on the rooftop of the Hall of the States building, with bird’s-eye views of Union Station and the Capitol.

The bride and groom’s wedding date was shared with the National Cherry Blossom Festival and the Blossom Kite Festival. It was also Easter weekend, as well as Spring Break for many. That meant a lot of tourists and a lot of traffic. Pre-planning transportation was a must to ensure that their guests, 90% of whom were out-of-towners, were able to navigate the city as seamlessly as possible so the wedding events ran smoothly and no one got lost!

While, at the end of the night, traffic would likely no longer be an issue, Bobbie and Tim wanted to round out their guests’ DC experience, so they told their guests they would also be treated to a free ride back to the hotel, along with a private moonlight tour of the US Capitol.
the DC monuments, a uniquely beautiful way to experience DC, courtesy of Old Town Trolley Tours. As they began to receive guests’ RSVPs, they were delighted that many expressed their excitement for this one-of-a-kind tour of the capital.

With the help of Abe Burgos (Charter and Group Sales), Bobbie and Tim planned an abbreviated version of the Monuments by Moonlight Night Tour for their guests. In addition to driving by some of the usual spots, such as the Capitol and the Washington Monument, drivers Bill and Jason veered from their usual route to include a few spots of personal significance to Bobbie and Tim. Jason, whose trolley the bride and groom were travelling on, even allowed the bride to emcee this segment of the tour.

The first point of interest was the corner of 9th and F Streets (at the National Portrait Gallery and International Spy Museum), where Bobbie and Tim first met face-to-face four years prior. Diagonal from that spot was Gordon Biersch, where they had their first kiss. Around the corner was Elephant & Castle, where their first date took place. And a bit further up the road was the Warner Theater, the site of their second date, a Brian Regan show.

The next location along the route was Freedom Plaza. Not only are the views of the Capitol down Pennsylvania Avenue pretty amazing, but this is where Tim proposed to Bobbie last summer. The final location was the drop-off at the Willard Hotel, where the bride, groom, and their guests were staying. This is also the location of Café du Parc, where Bobbie and Tim celebrated their engagement with a champagne toast, following the proposal.

Bobbie shared her thoughts on the end of the evening: “Tim and I couldn’t think of a more perfect way to cap off the night for our guests, while also ensuring everyone got back to the hotel safely. Everyone, especially those who aren’t local, thoroughly enjoyed the tour and commented on what a great idea it was. Of course, we have to thank our wedding coordinator, Candy Borales of Candy+Co. Events [candyandco.com], for coming up with that one!”

We certainly wish Bobbie and Tim the best life has to offer them. And Candy is super cool. I have another booking with her on 4th of July weekend. She really needs to stop getting me on these holiday weekends.
Michael Hart
Conductor; Washington DC

BACKGROUND
My name is Michael Hart and I have been a Tour Conductor in Washington DC since 2007. I have been the CDL trainer for several years and am proud of a near perfect success rate. I like getting to know our new cast members and helping them on their path. I have worked in many jobs over the years but think this may be the one I like best.

I grew up in the DC area and spent many hours exploring the many sights and attractions the city has to offer. It wasn’t until I spent 7 years in Denver that I truly appreciated how special, unique and beautiful Washington is. I enjoy meeting people from everywhere and the opportunity to share our nation’s capital. I get to see my city through “new eyes” on a daily basis and love to learn from my guests.

Away from work I have many interests and activities. I teach and promote Cajun and Zydeco dancing. My partner Sharon and I are “Dancing by the Bayou” and we have taught at many festivals, dances, and most recently at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

I also Geocache, a game that uses GPS technology to find locations worldwide.

Photography has always been of interest. I believe art is all around us and can be found in every part of our day to day lives. My favorite camera is the one on my I Phone.

I play Golf when I can find the time. Like most, the best part of the day is normally the good company and the outstanding weather.

Washington is blessed with a very active culture and arts community. We are lucky to have some of the world’s best museums and historical resources. It is, at times, difficult to keep up with the many great exhibits that are available.

I am proud to be a part of the best tour company in Washington DC.

Q | Which historical figure do you most identify with?
A | Ben Franklin

Q | What or who is the love of your life?
A | My daughter Sarah and my partner Sharon

Q | What is your most valued possession?
A | My friends and family

Q | Which talent would you most like to have?
A | I wish I had learned to play an instrument when I was young.

Q | What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
A | Procrastination. I actually was asked to be CASTmember spotlight six months ago and am now just getting to it.
ST. AUGUSTINE

From the Drawing Board To Reality

*by David Chatterton; General Manager*

It’s always particularly gratifying to see a long-term project finally take shape and become more than just an idea and a sketch on a drawing board. In St. Augustine, we are watching three such projects come to fruition, and all of them are even better than our expectations.

**Isuzu Vehicle**

Our first Isuzu Vehicle is in the loop! This project has had its setbacks in getting it off the ground. After all, no one has ever done anything quite like it before. But our dedicated team of mechanics and engineers overcame all obstacles, and the end result is simply stunning. The new Isuzu vehicle is a joy to behold, and even better to drive! The pull car and the two trailers are all brand new, and state of the art right down the line, with a brand-new suspension, crisp sound system, more power, and a much tighter turning radius.

In short, it rides like a dream. It’s also pretty cute, with its cowcatcher in front. It’s everything we were looking for, adding more comfort and ease of use, as well as a little bit of fun for our guests. We are already hard at work on the second vehicle, and the third one is in the process of being ordered. Within five years, we plan to have replaced our entire fleet with these gorgeous new vehicles.

So congratulations to Jim Freeman, John Thomas, Humberto Cabanes, and Holly Kelly, who have all made this possible.

**Old Town Archway**

We showed you in the last newsletter the drawing-board version of the Old Town Archway, and now here it is, in all its glory! Seeing the tangible product makes us that much more excited about our efforts to turn Old Town into a must-see destination in St. Augustine.

Old Town is a microcosm of the daily working life of regular people in this town in 1908. Shopkeepers, sheriff’s deputies, spice and tea merchants, and just plain folk are the attraction, giving our guests a glimpse into another world and time. It’s a side of St. Augustine history that has not been explored in detail before, so we’re delighted to add this new experience for St. Augustine visitors.

It also looks beautiful! Many thanks to Monte Triz, who designed the archway, to Randy Carter, who hand-crafted it with loving care, and to all our team who have been so supportive in making this dream a reality.

**Presenting our New St. Augustine Essential Guide Book**

We are delighted to announce our newest publication: The St. Augustine Essential Guide Book. Designed with both the casual and more adventurous tourist in mind, this book is a one-of-a-kind guide to the Ancient City, providing much more than the basics of a traditional souvenir photograph book.

The Essential Guide Book has been developed to serve double duty – as a memento for guests to take home with them and also as a way of enhancing their experience while they are visiting. The book follows the trolley route, with additional information throughout. Included are helpful tips on getting around town, recommendations for exploring “off the beaten path”, and much more historical detail – everything our visitors need to get the most out of their time in St. Augustine.

We believe this new Guide Book is truly “essential” for Old Town Trolley St. Augustine riders, as it adds a new dimension to their tour and to the time they spend around the historic district. By capturing the major points of interest with professional, eye-catching photographs, it also memorializes the beauty of the Ancient City for our guests.

We have just begun selling the Essential Guide Book in all our...
The Nation's Storyteller

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old town trolley tours of st. augustine

ticket locations, and if the first week of sales is any indication, we have quite a hit on our hands! They are selling like the proverbial hot cakes. Many thanks to Anne Marie Maltbie, who spearheaded this project, and to the publishers, Atlantique Press.

New costumes for our newest ghost hosts: (from left to right) Bonnie Nicol, Megan Nargane, Michael Williams, Chris Gregory, Justin Register and James DeFoor.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

APRIL
Elizabeth Nordan, 4 years
Karen Bradwell, 3 years
Robert Moore, 2 years
Sheila Farmer, 2 years
Debra Bennett, 2 years
Garrett Stephens, 2 years

MAY
Charles Everett, 5 years
Vincent Leone, 4 years
Mark MacFarlane, 3 years
Gayle Jenkins, 2 years
Katherine Hensler, 2 years
William Swicegood, 2 years
Marchia Vojcsik, 1 year
Michael Parkerson, 1 year
Marlena Batalla, 1 year
Nicole Falcao, 1 year

What a lovely sight! Our flower girls are History Tellers Marli Batalla and Bonnie Nicol, who greeted guests on Mother’s Day and presented all mothers with a long-stemmed carnation.

WELCOME ABOARD

Tej Jaffe
Darryl Walters
Stephanie Dilk
Sean Burton
Caroline Callaway
Stephen Lawson
Craig Muckle
Joseph Sinawa
Margarita Vargas

ON THE SPOT...

Suzann Maass
Museum Manager, St. Augustine

BACKGROUND
I grew up in a rural farming community called Arkville in the Catskill Mountains of New York. This hamlet of 500 was a wonderful place to be raised but I graduated high school in three years and left for college. I graduated college in three years too, earning my BA in Communications from the State University of New York, Oswego. Paying my own way through college was an incentive to graduate early! I worked as a singer in clubs throughout the Catskills.

Escaping the cold and snow, I moved from New York to St. Augustine shortly after college. I’ve worked in healthcare, insurance and banking in a marketing or training capacity. Singing remains my passion and I’ve enjoyed being in several shows at the Limelight Theatre and other venues in St. Augustine.

I am most proud of my son Paul, who earned his Master’s of Science degree in Education at FSU in Tallahassee and now teaches middle school in St. Augustine.

Four-legged babies keep me busy now. They include my Golden Retriever Bella and three cats: Lily, Trina and Romeo.

Q | What is your favorite vacation spot?
A | Tembe Park, South Africa

Q | What three things will you always find in your refrigerator?
A | Yogurt, cat food and beer

Q | What historical figure do you most identify with?
A | Cleopatra

Q | What is your greatest fear?
A | Spiders

Q | What do you most value in your friends?
A | Honesty, loyalty and above all, a good sense of humor.

CASTmembers of the Month

MARCH
Cedric Humphrey, Conductor
David Robb, Sales Rep
Ernie Poore, Supporting
Terry Herbert, History Teller
Megan Nargane, Ghost Host

APRIL
Jim Kimbrough, Conductor
Chris Holmes, Sales Rep
Davey Hairston, Supporting
Garrett Stephens, History Teller
Julie Ferry, Ghost Host

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The Nation’s Storyteller
Castillo Real

by Melissa Mezick; Vendor Representative

The staff at the Castillo Real are true professionals who do whatever it takes to please their guests – just like Old Town Trolleys! There are six consistent employees there constantly sell Old Town Trolley tickets, along with our Ghosts and Gravestone tickets, and they are very successful in doing so.

The Castillo Real is located on St Augustine’s pristine beach. Guests at this hotel utilize the complimentary Beach Bus Shuttle that passes by their hotel every hour. This is a wonderful way for the guests to sit back and relax, while Old Town Trolley drives them to the Historic Downtown area, where they board the trolleys.

A huge thank you to Rachel Delaney, the General Manager, and her fine staff in supporting Old Town Trolleys like they do.

Castillo Real

by Rachel Delaney; General Manager

Welcome to Castillo Real, a member of the exclusive Ascend Collection. Our beautiful boutique non-smoking hotel is perfectly located 200 steps away from the Atlantic Ocean and minutes away from the St. Augustine Historic area. The hotel is elegantly appointed with marble, granite, and solid wood furnishings. Our charming lobby features a three-story atrium, fountain, marble floors, and large columns.

After relaxing on the beach, guests can enjoy many amenities at the hotel, including our outdoor pool and whirlpool with fountain and sauna and steam room. The award-winning La Cocina Restaurant offers a varied menu including seafood, filets, pasta, chicken, and vegetarian dishes made with the freshest vegetables and organic ingredients, all served with an upscale Latin flair.

Guest rooms are elegantly appointed with solid wood furnishings, embellished with carved molding. The rooms offer marble and granite finishes in the entrance and bath area. Custom faux finishing in a warm and enchanting color scheme is accented by lively, impressionist artwork.

The design of the hotel is inspired by the architecture of Addison Mizner, a celebrated early 20th-century architect who led the renaissance of Florida resort design. The property’s design reflects a variety of motifs found in the indigenous Florida buildings of this era. It includes Spanish, Moorish, Romanesque and Gothic forms. The atmosphere and elegance found in the coastal communities of southeast Florida are found in the hotel’s architecture, ranging from tile roofs to fountains to lush, tropical landscaping.

The strong Spanish influence in the design of the Castillo Real is evident as soon as you enter the lobby.

The entrance to the Castillo Real on A1A Beach Blvd in St. Augustine Beach announces that this is a fine hotel.

The King Spa room is a true indulgence for guests at the Castillo Real.
SAVANNAH
Happy New Year? No Really!
by Charlie Brazil; General Manager

Even though I wished everyone a hearty welcome to 2013 in the last Nation’s Storyteller, for those of us who live in the “HTA Nation” we wait until April to wish our fellow CASTmembers a “Happy New Year” and bid farewell to the prior year (which concludes on March 31st). Fiscal year 2012-13 was a great one for Old Town Trolley Tours of Savannah! We provided TRANSPORTAINMENT to over 300,000 guests, which is more than 10,000 additional guests greater than the previous year and nearly 35,000 more than our closest brother/sister company. As I was telling my good friend Dave Chatterton as he was lauding St. Augustine’s herculean effort in surpassing OTT-SAV in the month of March 2013 by 200 riders, he only needs petition for an additional month down there in Florida, and he might be able to catch us. Good luck with that Dave! This unbelievable ridership was accomplished with an incredibly low refund rate, a very strong level of guest satisfaction and can be attributed 110% to our exemplary CAST, one and all, who put forth a supreme effort every single day, 364 days a year. It is a sincere pleasure to watch you all succeed at such a high level and to see the great pride you take in doing so. Thank you for the privilege of serving you and for the opportunity to bask alongside you in the enjoyment of the fruits of all of our labor.

At the end of March we successfully concluded another season of advertising sales in our FREE MAP, made some terrific improvements on this wonderful sales tool and also secured great offers on our coupon cards and advertisers on our interior trolley signs. Thanks to Susan Olson, who took over for Melissa Chatterton this year as our Advertising Sales Representative and for Craig Armstrong for helping Susan coordinate the process, as she took advantage of technology to do a lot of the work from her home base of Atlanta. I should also thank Erika Jacoby and the folks at Black Dog Advertising and Piper Smith and her office for the great work they did on the creative. KUDOS to all!

On April 1, we also implemented a price increase, a route change and some major Gateway Menu changes, all of which had to be coordinated to occur virtually at the same time. This included the replacement of all signage at the depots and the delivery of the new maps showing the route changes. Thanks to all that helped coordinate this, including Bruce Smith and Larry Strong in our Maintenance Departments who literally changed signage at 16 depots virtually overnight. Thanks to Alein and the folks at Signs Now as well for such great work on SO MANY signs. Amazing we were able to accomplish this in such a relatively seamless manner.

We also received the 5th of our new Molly Trolleys in April, and could not be happier with the product. They are performing very well and look terrific out there on the streets of Savannah. Thank you to the folks at Molly, to Joe Moyer and Ed Swift IV for implementing the vehicle replacement program and for finding such a terrific vendor for the trolley product that is the stage for all we do out there for our guests. The result of having these vehicles has been the overall improvement of our fleet, which allows our Maintenance Department the opportunity to focus their attention on bringing the other parts of our fleet up to the same standards as the new vehicles. We have resealed roofs, added new isenglass, and recently our hard working mechanics accomplished the rarely seen task of having ZERO trolleys down for more than three days! Congratulations!

I submitted and received approval for the FY2013-14 budget, and as our roadmap for success in the year ahead is laid out for us, I feel supremely confident that we will exceed the incredible performance of the past year and will accomplish all we set out to do with confidence, excellence and pride. Welcome to the New Year, and once again THANK YOU!!!

We’re in Bloom
by Marcie Larkin; Operations Manager

This time of the year in Savannah is wonderful! All the azaleas, dogwood trees and all the other beautiful flowers are in full bloom.

You know the season has arrived when the Forsyth Farmers’ Market opens back up. They are located at the South End of Forsyth Park in Historic Downtown Savannah; a variety of vendors will offer their produce and products to residents and visitors alike. The Forsyth Farmers’ Market vendors offer a variety of local goods including seasonal produce, eggs, honey, pastured meat, bread, cheese, mushrooms, fresh herbs, vegetable sauces, preserves, coffee beans, heirloom seeds and potted plants. Also at the park was SCAD’s annual Sidewalk Arts Festival, where Charlie and his family enjoyed the day checking out some great art and having a day of family fun!

The Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort and Spa offers their Oyster Roast, on the first Friday of each month. Buckets of oysters, a bar and a band! All of Savannah’s guests can enjoy live entertainment, great food, including tasty grill items for the landlubbers! The Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort & Spa also is home to the Liberty Mutual Insurance Legends of Golf. Two of golf’s most decorated icons, Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player, competed as a team. Michael Allen and David Frost won Legends on Champions Tour 2012. Old Town Trolley Tours of Savannah provided the transportation for this tournament again this year as we have for the past two years. Our Conductors that are golf fans always try to throw their names in to receive the charter. Good try though guys!

When the sun goes down, take a ride on the Savannah River Boats...
and hear the cannons firing from Old Fort Jackson. It’s a wonderful way to see the city from another view.

And of course, the best way to see the city is aboard the Orange and Green Trolley!

We all invite you to come and enjoy this beautiful city. We are all gracious to show all of our guests how much we all love it! I would also like to say Thank You to all the CASTmembers for a job well done!

**Safety and Training**

*by Kenny Gresham; Safety and Training Officer*

At this writing, our spring training class has graduated and are driving the loop safely. More emphasis was placed on safety this year and the desired result was achieved. The preceding sentences were written last year. Same safety training this year but with a different result. We’ve had two rookie mistakes; one right rear and one backing accident. Both these infractions were due to our conductors dealing with guests and not being in their safety comfort zones. This usually happens when a turn is made from an unfamiliar position. Too many times in dealing with code reds I’ve heard the excuse, “I wanted to get closer for my guests.” Thanks for the humanitarian effort (in most cases we’re actually talking about saving the guests about two feet of walking distance,), but a very wise and distinguished gentleman came up with our company slogan, “Safety First, Courtesy a Close Second” a number of years ago when Historic Tours of America was beginning. He knew what he had on his hands.

ESP is an anachronism for the type of business we’re in. The “E” is for ENTERTAIN. We do this better than most. We strive to become the Nation’s Storyteller and make our history come alive. “S” is for SERVICE. We offer the very best possible. Our tour product is guaranteed. No excuses and no problems. “P” is for PEOPLE. Every guest deserves the ultimate compliment of recognition. We want them to become our friends. We do all of these things very well. It’s just when we become a little too entertaining, go overboard on offering service, and put ourselves in jeopardy trying to please others that the problems arise. We want to be the best, but being the best has to begin with safety. We may get closer to the curb, save a few steps and a couple minutes, but in the long run all this goes for naught because of the inconvenience of waiting for a police officer, filling out witness statements, and finally being released to another trolley. These delays far outweigh the little bit of creature comfort that we are trying to give our guests. “Safety First, Courtesy a Close Second” and “Think, Think, Think”. Before I forget, thank you Mr. Belland for the safety message that still rings so true today.

**HR Report**

*by Jon Watkins; Director of Human Resources*

Welcome to season in Savannah! The call center is buzzing with calls helping all of our guests with any of their myriad of questions. During this time of the year it’s not unusual for us to take 1,500+ inbound calls per day. We staff the call center / administration function from 7:45am until up to 11:00pm on a busy ghost tour night. Thanks to our dedicated admin staff Craig Armstrong, Joyce Stuckey, Jaimee Drayton, Claude Freeman, Carol Overby, Kim Evans and Debbie Hosey. They do a great job every day “giving our guests the pickle”. We also recently celebrated Administrative Professionals day with a luncheon.

We had our March CASTmeeting at Club One which is located in the City Market area. Club One features the world famous “Lady Chablis” who was one of the main characters in the movie Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil. Chablis spoke to our cast about her act and gave us a small sample of it. In April we revisited the Massie Heritage Center which is the location for the first public school in Georgia. They are one of our newer partners and we now have a stop right in front of there on the revised tour route. It is a great place for guests to get an overview orientation of Savannah and they did a fantastic job hosting us. They had several new displays which were very interesting.

Congratulations to our Lead Mechanic James Gibby. He recently received medium/heavy truck ASE certifications in gas engines, drivetrain, brakes, electrical and PM/Inspections.

We all celebrated our recent “of the Months”. February: Michael Smith (Conductor), Sally Kruger (Sales), Joy Stuckey (Supporting), Linda Sickler (Ghosts and Gravestones). March: Lillie Shaw (Conductor), Janice Emerson (Sales), Kim Evans (Supporting), Lynette Williams (Ghosts and Gravestones).

Welcome aboard to our newest CASTmembers Jody Christie (Ghost Conductor - Glad to have you back!), Rich Montaudo (Conductor - Glad to have you back too!), Ed Allen (Sales Rep. - Glad to have you back also!), Eric Haley (Sales Rep.), Jazmine Carpenter (Ghost Conductor), Tina Miller (Ghost Conductor), Richard Cheeley (Ghost Host), Adrianna Rogers (Ghost Host), Holly Edenfield (Sales Rep.)

**Maintenance**

*by Bruce Smith; Maintenance Manager*

We are now getting into our peak season, and the trolleys are doing very well so far. We have invested a lot of time and money into our older fleet the past two years, which I am happy to say, has paid off. I would say we are having about 75% less breakdowns than we did two years ago, the repairs are less extensive so they are not as costly and can be repaired quickly.

We did achieve the goal of having all the fleet up at one time, it was a year ago the last time they were all up; it only lasted for three days but we can accept that. We were able to reach that goal because of the hard work and dedication from the mechanics in the shop. We finally have a crew that’s more interested in getting the job completed instead of killing the clock. Special thanks go out to the lead mechanic James Gibby, Paul Olesch, Mark Tilley and Jeff
**Vendor Department**

*by Robert “The Colonel” Hunter; Vendor Sales Manager*

We finished 2012-2013 in GREAT shape! We are well over budget costs from last year! We’ve added a few new vendors and our Boarding Pass program is growing rapidly. Checking in with our current hotel partners and working to bring new hotels on board keeps me busy and on the go from Savannah to Hilton Head and everywhere in between.

This month we are featuring Merry Bennett, concierge at the Westin Savannah. Merry is a SUPERSTAR and is the top vendor sales agent we have! Thanks to Merry for all you do for us!

**Depot Sales**

*by Garry Patrick; Depot Sales Manager*

Greetings Everyone from the depot sales department. After finishing the 2012 Fiscal with a fantastic March, the entire team looks forward to another great year of sales. Package content continues to grow as we come up with new and exciting ways for people to spend their time in Savannah. In the last 12 months we have added many new products to our menus. These products present more opportunity for us to engage our guests and service their needs whilst in town. Not only do we save them money when they buy from us, but we also offer the convenience of a “one stop shop”. I love to watch our guests leave the Welcome Center with a smile on their face feeling like they got a deal!

In Savannah it’s all about teamwork. With over 25 Depot and Concierge sales people in our department the competitiveness is always at the fore. However, I am proud to say, our teamwork and dedication to helping our new sales staff develop their skills continues to be an indication of our true strength. Each one of our highest achievers plays an important role in mentoring new staff and to their credit they share all their skills and talents to help make “the team” stronger. Having worked in sales management for many years I find this to be an amazing environment that is rarely achieved. Sadly, most sales philosophies promote the individual being the best. I’m happy our best sales professionals are also our best team players! I think that’s what makes working for HTA and OTT a great experience. Finally I want to say congratulations to all sales staff on achieving high scores on their percentage to goal this last year. In a mature market like Savannah with strong competition it’s not easy. A special thanks and mention to Sally Kruger on being recognized as one of the Elite Top 10 Sales People in 2012 in the company. A great achievement!

**Wow. Wow. Wow.**

*by Joyce Ellis; Groups & Charters Manager*

Wow again. The OTT-SAV Groups and Charters Department has hit the ground running for our new fiscal year. In April we busted our goal and more! Needless to say Craig and I have been running on empty when May came in. No time to nap; we’re well on our way for another goal buster in May. We will keep you posted!

To accomplish these hefty goals, we have been touring the ACL cruise line and the Blount Small Ships, each Cruise line known for the smaller ships that carry 50-100 guests average. Known for exceptional services and accommodations, something we do so well here at OTT-SAV. We’ve also seen a steady stream of our usual school groups, end of the year trips; Girl Scouts; weddings and more weddings.

We also provided shuttle services for the Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf, hosted by the Westin resort. We saw Jack Nicklaus, Tom Watson, Mize, Couples, O’Meara, Stadler, and all the great Senior Golfer at the Westin Harbor Resort.

Speaking of Golf, we might not be legends but we played a mean round of golf at the Westin Harbor just two weeks after the real Legends finished. I had the honor of being a team captain along with Garry Patrick (head sales manager). Our two teams (conductors vs. sales), competed in the Tourism Leadership Council Annual Golf Tournament. I’m proud to say that my team, Don Hendrix, Jim Beam and Rich Montaudo finished with a respectable 65 or 73; depending on our handicap. I must admit that the three guys were much better at golf than I am, and were very patient with me. Thank goodness it was best ball with a shotgun start or we could still be out there.

Stay tuned and let’s see what June and July brings for Savannah. We’re ready and waiting for you! Welcome to Savannah!!

**Haunted Happenings**

*by Wade Holmes; Ghosts & Gravestones Manager*

Hello again from Ghosts and Gravestones of Savannah! Things have been very exciting as we gear up for our busy season. We had a taste of what is in store for summer during Spring Break and Easter, running 12 tours nearly every night for several weeks. While our ridership is projected to calm down a bit until June, the GG& CAST is still progressing toward improving the all-around experience for our guests.
All of our most recent additions to the Ghosts & Gravestones CAST have completed training and new team members have taken their place in the classroom. It is my pleasure to welcome Richard Cheely and Adrianna Rogers to Ghosts and Gravestones. I look forward to seeing them haunting the streets of Savannah and providing our guests with a world-class experience aboard the trolley of the doomed.

Since our last Haunted Happenings, we have implemented new paranormal investigation elements to the Gribble House portion of the tour. Our ghost hosts now distribute interactive EMF (electromagnetic field) detectors at the end of the Gribble House presentation. Our guests and CASTmembers have given us overwhelmingly positive feedback on the improvements.

We have also made an operational improvement to how we approach the site of the Gribble House. The Trolley of the Doomed will park on the side of the property and the host will walk guests in from the outside rather than the trolley parking inside of the building. This addresses several issues including: garage door malfunctions, trolley fumes/leaks inside the building, cars parked in front of the entrance/exit, and tours potentially disrupting each other at this location due to timing issues. I believe that this will also set a more appropriately mysterious mood as guests enter the building individually through a hallway rather than through an electric garage door.

We have also implemented an interactive audio presentation to this portion of the tour. Hosts will be able to cue EVP audio clips recorded in the building during previous paranormal investigations. We are all excited about the potential chill-factor that these new elements will produce when used together at the sight of the “most diabolical crime in the history of Savannah.” Until next time, we hope to see you aboard the Trolley of the Doomed here in “America’s Most Haunted City.”

**In The Kitchen With**

**John Watkins**

**Low Fat Taco Soup**

(1 cup = 3 Weight Watcher points)

I started a diet in September 2012 to help improve my overall heath. I decided to use the Weight Watchers diet as it seemed to be sustainable as a lifestyle change instead of just being on a diet. What I didn’t want to do was lose the weight just to later regain it as many dieters do. To date I’ve lost 80 pounds and this recipe is one that I’ve prepared frequently. It’s got really great flavor and is very easy to prepare. It’s also low in “points” on the Weight Watchers plan. Enjoy!

**Ingredients**

- 1 lb. ground turkey breast
- 1 large onion (I used ½ medium), Chopped
- 1 (1 oz) package hidden valley original ranch dressing mix
- 1 (1 ¼ oz) package taco seasoning mix (I used mild flavor, lower sodium kind)
- 1 (15 oz) can cannellini beans
- 1 (15 oz) can black beans
- 1 (15 oz) can whole kernel corn
- 1 (15 oz) can stewed tomatoes (Mexican flavor)
- 1 (15 oz) can stewed tomatoes

1. Spray pan with cooking spray and brown meat and onion.
2. Mix ranch dressing mix and taco seasoning mix together, then add to the meat.
3. Add all other ingredients. (I drained and rinsed both the cannellini and black beans, but not the corn or tomatoes. Because I did this I added about 1/3 cup of no fat low sodium chicken broth to the pot. When I saw the stewed tomatoes came out of the can in slices, I put them in the blender for just a whirl or two so they would not be chunky).
4. Simmer one hour
Can be served with tortilla chips if desired.
The Nation’s Storyteller

old town trolley tours of savannah

VENDOR SPOTLIGHT

Merry Bennett
Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort & Spa
by Robert “The Colonel” Hunter; Vendor Sales Manager

As soon as Merry Bennett begins speaking, you are immediately drawn into and intrigued by the charm and grace that Georgia has to offer. Merry has a deep appreciation for history, which is conveyed through a passionate cadence and welcoming smile. Merry has an instinctual ability to recall a litany of regional historic footnotes and local lore. Any conversation with Merry will start with cordial interest and lead to intense fascination with all the knowledge she has to offer.

Having roots in Charleston, living in Augusta and residing in Savannah for the past 34 years, Merry can eloquently describe personal connections to this land, its people and their significance. With her history education and tenure as a trolley tour guide, Merry can adeptly describe the varied and historical elements up and down her favorite avenue—Bull Street. From Nathanael Greene to Count Casimir Pulaski to the Drayton family—she brings history alive. She likely knows every bump in the historic district and can relate a tale on every one.

As a “daughter of a son of a sailor” Merry is an avid boater. She is not only generationally connected to the sea, but was also integral to the 1996 Olympic Yachting events here in Savannah. These days she takes her Boston Whaler out as often as she can and says, “Everyone wants to be on the big boat, but it’s the small boat that makes the sailor”.

As the concierge at The Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort and Spa, you’ll notice Merry as she’ll always greet you with a smile and never steer you wrong.

Merry Bennett

ON THE SPOT...

Wade Holmes
Ghosts and Gravestones Manager

BACKGROUND
Hello everyone! My name is Wade Holmes. I am the Ghosts and Gravestones Manager here in Savannah. I am originally from Evansville, Indiana, but also lived in southern California before finally settling in Georgia. I moved here with my girlfriend, Erica, and our dog, Rutabaga. Erica and I first visited Savannah in 2011 while she was being considered for a position with Savannah’s public transit authority. We immediately fell in love with Savannah’s charm and lucky for us, she was accepted for the position.

I started with Old Town Trolley Tours of Savannah in March of 2012 as a sales rep. After nearly a year in that position, I was hired as G&G Manager and transitioned the program from third-party management back in-house in February. This is such a fun place to work. Honestly, how many people can say that they get paid to share the haunted side of Savannah? We have so many great people in our CAST and I really enjoy meeting folks from all over the world who come to visit us.

Q | What is your idea of perfect happiness?
A | Wasn’t this a pickup line in a Bill Murray film? I am happiest when I am with Erica either playing music for people or traveling to a new place. Things couldn’t get much better.

Q | If you were to come back as a person or thing, what would it be?
A | My dog has a pretty easy-going existence. Free food, free shelter, unconditional love, infinite play time. Let me know when you figure out how to make that happen.

Q | What three things will you always find in your refrigerator?
A | Water (they built it in), ice (see water), salad dressing (how many bottles does one person need?)

Q | Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
A | Robert Langdon.

Q | What is your most treasured possession?
A | Well I don’t have many. I prefer to measure my quality of life in terms of experiences and interactions. That being said, friends, family, and mementos of my experiences would best answer the question.
SAN DIEGO

In the Trolley World
by Terri Zorn; Operations Manager

The trolley tour started the new fiscal year very strong with increased riders compared to last year. We had 12% more just in the month of April and a strong May thanks to lots of visiting cruise ships. Spring has definitely sprung for us here in San Diego; and with Spring, comes new life. For us, that means new hires in lots of departments. We hired 12 new tour conductors who have made it through auditions and embarked on a 7-8 week, rigorous training schedule to learn how to drive a trolley, entertain guests from all over the world with their own unique personalities while providing an informative tour covering over 450 years of history, stay on schedule, and talk on a two-way radio, all at the same time! We are also working on a beach tour, having completed a map, songs, script, route, and a special trolley. Hopefully we will be unveiling this new tour option this summer, taking advantage of our number one attraction – 70 miles of free beaches. There is a lot going on this Spring as we prepare for a busy Summer. It’s been a bit hectic training such a large class as we lost several conductors in the past few months. Some have retired, others had medical reasons. Sadly, one of our veteran conductors and a trainer, Todd Van Every, passed away. Todd will be incredibly missed. We will be doing a memorial tour for Todd’s friends the end of May and there will definitely be a Bombay Gin martini glass on the table to mark his spot.

SEALS

San Diego Enjoy Three Cruise Ships in Port in One Day!

Three cruise ships called on San Diego on Tuesday, May 7th, bringing with them nearly 5,000 passengers to town for a day of sight-seeing, shopping and eating at local restaurants.

Holland America’s Zuiderdam, Celebrity Solstice and Oceania Regatta docked around dawn and midday at the B Street Pier. The Celebrity and Oceania being the first time to San Diego and Celebrity Solstice the longest cruise ship to ever call on San Diego.

The port of San Diego officials estimate that every stop by a cruise ship injects around $2 million into the local economy.

While the cruise business has boomed globally, it has sagged in San Diego in recent years because of the economy and concerns about violent crime in Mexico.

Old Town Market Prepares for Summer Season
by John Savage; OTM Operations and Leasing Manager

Here at the market we have been going through our yearly routine of getting ready for another season. All the trees and landscaping have been inspected, trimmed and treated so they can provide beauty and shade all season long. Mike LeBold, the artist, and his dog Twinkle have been working on the signs around the property; they have been “brightening them up” in order to have that fresh friendly appearance Historic Tours is known for.
This year we changed out the glass viewing panel in the courtyard. The panel allows guests to see for themselves the original foundation to the Casa de Aguirre. Having a glass panel on the floor of a heavily traveled courtyard can be a challenge. It has to hold up to hundreds of people walking across it each day, and yet still be clear enough for them to see the history underneath. New developments in non-skid technology allowed for smaller presence on the glass which improved viewing. During the glass change out we were able to add new LED lighting to reduce our energy use while increasing the amount of light in the display. The changes are most dramatic at night, every visitor to the courtyard now walks over to investigate.

**Old Town Market Helps Celebrate Cinco de Mayo in Old Town**

On May 5th 1862, an ill-equipped Mexican army augmented by Mestizo and Zapotec Indians commanded by General Ignacio Zaragoza defeated the French army. Many experts believed the French army to be the best in the world at that time, and that is why Cinco de Mayo is celebrated today.

This year was the 30th anniversary of Old Town San Diego’s Cinco de Mayo celebration. The event is the largest of its kind in Southern California, and this year’s event was over three days because the 5th, Cinco, was on a Sunday.

Three stages featured non-stop entertainment over the three days and nights. Some of the highlights were the Ballet de Folkloric dance competition finals, the Navy band Southwest, along with Mariachi, rock and roll and other dance music.

Red Bull transformed San Diego Avenue into three soccer fields for a street tournament featuring over 100 teams from all over Southern California.

Always popular attractions like stage coach rides, Mexican equestrian riders, the petting zoo and the kids play area complete with its own stage were again a big hit.

Low Rider Lane was back this year and sponsored by our very own Old Town Market. Over 40 cars competed each day for a “People’s Choice” and a “Best in Show” trophy.

**29th Annual Mission Federal ArtWalk**

*by Erica Frost; Charters and Group Sales Manager*

The 29th annual Mission Federal ArtWalk took place under blue skies, with swarms of attendees filling the streets.

Hundreds of local artists of varying media forms paired with food vendors, local food trucks and street musicians offered a feast for the senses at this year’s annual ArtWalk in Little Italy.

Art Walk is San Diego’s largest urban arts festival. This free event gives the public a rare opportunity to meet nationally known and emerging local artists and all the action takes place in the heart of Little Italy and each year the event attracts more than 100,000 attendees.

San Diego Old Town Trolley participated with a booth promoting the Trolley and SEAL Tours along with our Hometown Pass program. With a Hometown pass, residents of San Diego County go free on the Trolley or SEAL Tour with one other full paid guest; a 2-for-1 deal. Trolleys got in on the action too as they were seen whisking folks from off-site parking lots over to the hub of ArtWalk.

**New CAST Join the San Diego Team**

*by Carmen Thulin, Office Manager*

In March, we began hiring for our busy summer season; a total of 19 new CASTmembers.

Captains James Murphy Jr. along with 1st Mates Matthew Lester, Crystal Durden, and Lance Morton joined our SEAL Tour crew. We welcomed back Captain Jim Saffer, Captain Robert Murphy, Captain Robin Kedward, Captain Darrell McNurlan, and 1st Mate Simon Kedward. Head SEAL Mark Keeler led the training out in the field for both Captain and 1st Mate training. All passed certification.

Welcome on board new SEAL crew!

Trolley drivers David Erdman, Heidi Aylon, Robert Garrett Jr., Brian Richard, Christopher Rosal, Jeffrey Love, Michael Persinger, Peter Hobbs, Stephen Scott, David Dalton, Rodney Foster, and Thomas Salter hopped on board the trolley tour as our newest conductors.

Trolley conductor training requires approximately seven to eight weeks of classroom and in the field training learning safety, the tour route and script and just having fun with the nation’s storyteller.
Disaster Preparedness

by Bob Ross; Safety Officer

No matter where you live, you may become a victim of a natural disaster, whether from fire, flood, earthquake, hurricane, or blizzard. Suriving a disaster requires thinking about what happens during & after a disaster. We can better prepare if we know what kind of scenario we might face. Basic services are disrupted, families are separated, and there are injuries & loss of life. Practically speaking there may be no gas for heating or cooking; no water for drinking, cleaning, personal hygiene, and sewage; no electrical power for lights, possibly heating and cooking, traffic lights, emergency medical equipment, ATM’s; facilities like clinics, schools, grocery stores, gas stations, etc. close; emergency help and first responders are unavailable - emergency services are overloaded resulting in loss of life, injuries requiring First Aid go untreated; homes are damaged, people are unable to return to damaged property, road closures, bridge closures, public transportation does not function; families are separated due to disrupted communications.

Three Actions You Can Take for Emergency Preparedness

1. Make a Plan
2. Get a Kit
3. Be Informed

Make a Plan

Create A Plan with Your Family

Decide Where to Meet After A Disaster

Having predetermined meeting places will save time and minimize confusion if your home is affected or if the area is evacuated. Choose two meeting places; one near your home, in case of a sudden emergency and another outside your neighborhood, in case you can’t return home or are asked to evacuate.

Develop a Communication Plan

Choose an out-of-area contact for all members of the family to call in case of disaster. The selected contact person should live far enough away that they would be unaffected by the same event that affected you and they should know they are the chosen contact. This person will be the central collecting point for information on the location and condition of family members.

Home Preparedness

Before it becomes necessary, learn how to shut off utilities. Including gas, water and electricity.

Get a Kit

Be prepared to meet your own needs for at least three days.

Emergency Supplies

When organizing supplies for an earthquake and deciding what to include, remember that it may be several days before services or assistance are readily available. So what kinds of things should go into your kit?

- Food
- Water
- Prescription Medications
- First Aid Supplies
- Personal Hygiene and Sanitation
- Important Documents (copies)
- Flashlights, Radio and Extra Batteries
- CASH (It will be important to have enough cash to last for several days because banks and ATM’s are likely to be damaged)
- Shelter
- Warm Clothing

Emergency Food

The easiest items to store and maintain are food items that require no cooking or only minimal heating.

Your emergency supplies should include enough non-perishable food for the whole family (including pets) to last several days. Things like canned soups, MRE’s (military surplus Meals Ready to Eat), granola bars, or energy bars. And remember if you stock canned food – Pack a can opener! A camp or backpacking stove with enough propane or canned fuel will allow you to heat food items or boil water. Rotate the food supplies every six months.

Safe Drinking Water

Dehydration occurs much more quickly than starvation. You can survive for up to three weeks without food but only three days without water. An average person will feel the effects in about 36 hours. This happens quicker with the very young, the very old, or persons on certain medications.

Your water supply should be one gallon per person per day; store about a seven day supply. The one and two gallon containers
found in grocery stores are not designed for long term storage. They begin to leak after about six months. And don’t store them directly on a concrete floor. Contaminants can leach through the thin plastic containers. Better containers can be purchased at camping or survival stores. If using re-fillable containers, add 8 drops of pure unscented liquid bleach per gallon of water to limit bacterial contamination. If you are not certain about the safety of the available fresh water you have, boil it for 10 minutes before using.

Other Sources
Water stored in water heaters can be used as well. Turn off gas or electricity to heater. Turn off water coming into the unit (if you suspect contamination of the city water supply). Once the water has cooled, you can safely open the drain at the bottom it.

The toilet storage tank (not toilet bowl) should be safe as long as it doesn’t have coloring or disinfectants in it.

Melted ice cubes can also be used for drinking water. Also, water trapped in home pipes can be used. Turn off the main water valve. Open the water valve at the highest point in the house, and then you may be able to drain water from the tap or valve at the lowest point in your home.

Store your Supplies
It is important to gather these supplies before disaster strikes -- whether you assemble them yourself or purchase a kit from the Red Cross or other supplier.

At Home: When organizing supplies for an earthquake, remember that you need to be able get to them after a disaster has turned your house into a mess. Store supplies in an easy to find location not likely to be buried under heavy objects. A large covered trashcan makes an excellent storage container; an overnight backpack or duffel bag will also work. You can also buy storage containers like Rubbermaid at places like Target and Wal-Mart.

In Your Vehicle: Keep a smaller version of the kit in your vehicle or carry one in transit. If you become stranded or are not able to return home, having some items with you will help you be more comfortable until help arrives.

At Work: You also need disaster supplies at work.

Be Informed
When a major disaster occurs, your community can change in an instant. Loved ones can be hurt, and emergency response can be delayed. It’s important to know how to stay safe.

VENDOR SPOTLIGHT

Angela Menna
Chief Concierge at the Pacific Terrace Hotel

This month I would like to spotlight Angela Menna, Chief Concierge at the Pacific Terrace Hotel. Angela has close to 20 years in the hospitality industry, ranging from event planner to chief concierge. Angela was born and raised in San Diego and has worked in properties covering all tourist hotspots including the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina, Humphrey’s on Shelter Island and the Holiday Inn on the Bay. Angela and her colleague Katherine Taylor are terrific supporters and use our Trusted Tours online ticket system for all their guest’s ticket needs.

The Pacific Terrace Hotel is San Diego’s rare four diamond oceanfront hotel. Dramatically perched above the white sandy beaches of Pacific Beach, they provide a front row seat to the ever changing world of the sparkling blue Pacific Ocean. The staff is wonderful, and the location is amazing. The hotel is located at the far quiet end of a stretch of beach, with a boardwalk that extends three and a half miles south of them, with oceanfront restaurants and shops. Pacific Beach is located eight miles north of the airport, and just a few miles from La Jolla, known for their beautiful beach cliffs, and high-end shopping. I want to thank Angela, Katherine and the entire staff at the Pacific Terrace Hotel for all their great support for Old Town Trolley Tours and SEAL Tours!
Hello, world!

My name is Bêlit Wartooth Smith and I’m a seven month old Cane Corso (Italian Mastiff.) Right now, I only weigh 78 pounds, but my momma is 120 pounds and my daddy is 140 pounds, so I’ll be gettin’ up there in no time! When I hear my human parents talk about me, I hear them say, “personification of destruction”, but I’m not sure what that means. Oh well. My hobbies include giving high fives, wrestling, and chewing on everything. Just last weekend, I had fun chewing apart the electrical cords to the sprinkler system in the backyard! Man, I find the coolest stuff. Also, I’m really good at doing tricks! My human parents set up a hanging bell on the sliding glass door, so whenever I want to go potty outside, I just ring the bell and they come to open the door for me! I get the best service. I really have it made!

Happy Anniversary

April
Carmen Thulin, 15 years
David Aptaker, 9 years
Richard Smith, 8 years
Oscar Rene Alfaro, 5 years
Orlando Montano, 3 years
Jon Laws, 3 years
John Barton, 3 years
Tomi Nieszoda, 3 years
Arthur Burgess Jr., 3 years
George Smith, 3 years
Philip Fondaw, 3 years
William Walker, 3 years
Kenneth Hill, 1 year
Susan Vetter, 1 year
Murray Jacobson, 1 year
Lynn Harris, 1 year
Jason Hascall, 1 year

Seals
Mark Keeler, 9 years
Robin Kedward, 7 years
Robert Murphy, 3 years
George Adams, 1 year
Simon Kedward, 1 year
Brenda Martin, 1 year

May
Nancy Nuhaily, 24 years
Robert Ross, 14 years
Michael Devlin, 12 years
Francisco Noguez-Ballestros, 11 years
Heleodoro Gonzalez, 10 years
Chris Chiotiras, 9 years
Inocente Briones, 7 years
Robert Hatcher, 6 years
Donald Kaye, 6 years
Christian Perez Navarro, 4 years
Linda Florentino, 4 years
Cristina Valenzuela, 3 years
Jessica Kordylas, 2 years

Seals
Darrell McNurlan, 5 years
David LaVigne, 3 years
Samuel Hooper, 2 years
Miguel Rosa, 2 years

Cast Members of the Month

March
Jim Fraley, Conductor
Karen DeHaan, Sales Rep.
Erin Smith, Supporting

April
Suzie Vetter, Conductor
David Mahl, Sales Rep.
Frankie Noguez, Supporting
Brenda Martin, SEAL

On the Spot...

Albert Guzman
Mechanic; Old Town Trolley Tours of San Diego

Background
Hello Nation’s Storyteller readers, my name is Albert Guzman. I am a mechanic for Old Town Trolley and SEAL Tours of San Diego. I was born in Los Angeles, California, on January 11, 1977 and lived there until 1998. I still consider myself an Angeleno and what I miss the most is going to see my team the LA Dodgers.

I moved to San Diego in 1998 and began working for Historic Tours of America shortly after. This has been a great place to work. I enjoy the work environment, the people, and especially my job, it’s always something different and challenging.

Q | What is your idea of perfect happiness?
A | Definitely living here in San Diego.

Q | Which living person do you most admire?
A | My mom, she has always been there for me.

Q | What is your greatest fear?
A | Not being there for the people that count on me the most.

Q | What or who is the greatest love of your life?
A | My children, Kenny, Anthony, and Precilla

Q | If you could choose one reality TV show to be on, what would it be?
A | Wipe Out, I love a challenge.

Old Town Trolley Tours of San Diego

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KEY WEST

**In Bloom**

*by Steven Burress; Old Town Trolley Operations Manager*

I was walking through town this weekend and noticed the beautiful spring flowers blooming all over the island. Our royal poinciana trees are beginning to light the island on fire. This beautiful tree is often called the Flame Tree. Hemingway once said that the island was on fire, as he looked over the canopy of Royal Poinciana trees.

As I walked and enjoyed the beauty of the trees and flowers, it made me think of the opportunity we have to grow, blossom and make an impact on people with the beauty we possess inside. We don't have to wait for that opportunity to come once each year, but each day we can wake up with a new opportunity to show our inner beauty. Each person we come in contact with needs to see what we possess. When you smile, say a kind word, thank someone for a job well done, it becomes infectious and begins to spread like the blossoms on the Flame Tree. Soon you are surrounded by beauty, kindness, smiles and good words. Please do me a favor this spring! At least three days a week, when you show up at work, choose someone that will receive your cheer that day. Someone who maybe doesn’t work with you on a daily basis and tell them thank you. For whatever the reason, maybe it is the way your dispatcher has been working so hard, or perhaps a ticket sales representative who always has a smile. Maybe it is someone who has been having a hard time and all they really need to make their day is for you to tell them that you appreciate what they do. It will make a difference in your life, as well as theirs. You will find that it spreads outside of work and people will enjoy being in the presence of a person who gives off amazing energy. Your operation will benefit because the guests will see that energy, feel that energy and take it with them wherever they go next!

**Spring is in the Air!**

*by Mary Martinez; Old Town Trolley and Conch Tour Train Office Manager*

The Easter Bunny came as promised, and this year he dropped off lots of visitors on Spring Break! There has been more than one day when those of us who are normally at the office spent time in town helping guests find their way, answering questions, or to simply be a friendly face in the middle of a crowd. Now that the season has begun to wind down, we are turning our attention from spring break to Spring Cleaning at all areas of the trolley. We are checking our extra uniforms to make sure they are in good shape, we are looking at our files to determine what we can keep, what we can archive or even what we may not need anymore. One of the goals each year we do Spring Cleaning is to see if there is anything we could do to streamline the processes we have in place, and that brings us to a significant development in the world of Office Management and Human Resources.

We are moving towards a web-based application process powered by “Taleo.” No longer will someone have to sit in a reception area or somewhere else in a strange building to fill out what can be a cumbersome application form. Now anyone who would like to work by “Taleo.” No longer will someone have to sit in a reception area or somewhere else in a strange building to fill out what can be a cumbersome application form. Now anyone who would like to work with any of our operations in any city may go to www.historictours.com and select the “careers” tab on the website. From there you are easily directed to where we list the different cities which have openings as well as which positions are available. It has taken off in Key West so far, and we look forward to when this becomes the main method of receiving applications.

Finally, we couldn’t let the month of April go by without acknowledging Administrative Professionals Day which was Wednesday, April 24. While our tour guides and conductors are busy showing our guests everything Key West has to offer, Sabrina, Suzanne and Stephen are handling the phones, doing various projects for all of us, and not to mention answering the hundreds of questions that guests ask them every day as they plan out their stay!

**Time for a Little Break**

*by Candy Jones; Old Town Trolley Head Conductor*

It’s that time of year when our winter visitors leave and head back to the cooler North. Our average temperature right now is 84-89 degrees. This is also the time of year when business slows down, and for a couple of reasons; cruise ships divert away from the Western Caribbean and 90 degrees with a 100% humidity is just too hot!!! Winter guests are not the only ones who leave our little island. We also have seasonal employees who transfer from other cities. Who wants to drive a trolley in the snow? Not me!

Our drivers here at Old Town Trolley Key West have worked long, busy days and weeks during our peak season winter months. We look forward to this time of year when we can take a deep breath, but also it’s time for us to go on vacation and be a tourist ourselves! The roles are now reversed. It is very important that we take time off and recharge our batteries. Not only do we come back to our job refreshed but maybe with a different perspective. Did you go on a guided tour while on vacation? Visit a museum or landmark? Did anything particular or someone particular stand out to you? Did it make you stop and think about your tour and how you treat your guests? Did it remind you that the people you talk to on your trolley are on vacation and that they have made you a part of their vacation and experience? We have a very important job as Tour Conductors, to help make someone’s vacation a memorable one and to show them why we are the Nation’s Storyteller.

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By Steven Burress; Old Town Trolley Operations Manager

By Mary Martinez; Old Town Trolley and Conch Tour Train Office Manager

By Candy Jones; Old Town Trolley Head Conductor

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How Many Lives Did You Touch Today... Did you Make a Difference?

by Andy Kirby; Excursion Liaison Manager

Looking into the future I see great times a coming our way. When we take a moment to step back and reflect on our mistakes that’s when we learn. It gets the ball rolling into the right direction, heading towards the goal. If you really think about it from morning to days end, it all comes down to how many lives you touched today, and did you really make a difference. I mean when you wake up you have your first important decision to make as your feet are hitting your bedroom floor. Am I going to wake up happy or grumpy? Do not be one of the ones in life that looks for evil to happen, you have to look for the good all time. When things go wrong and they will at times this is where champions are born. It’s what you do after you have been knocked down, you get right back up. You rebuild bigger, better, stronger. And we are doing that here at HTA, laying down the foundation for new tomorrows. In order to do that we all have to touch lives every day in a positive manner. To really make a difference. It’s not easy, it can be done. Selling is not just a product that is exchanged with money. We all have to sell ourselves. By doing that we have the positive energy needed to touch other lives that need a kind word or a smile. Think about it the next time you pass by that person, that just walks by you and doesn’t even smile or say hello. The next time don’t take it personally just say hello, and move on. Little by little your energy gets carried down the field. In football the old saying by the yard it’s hard, but by the inch it’s a cinch. Sometimes big games are won over inches. Continue to be the best you can be, helping us all by selling yourselves in a positive way. You will make a difference in lives because you will have touched so many. ---- Enjoy your next Sunset

Cruise Update

by David Casey; Cruise Ship Liaison

It is interesting to see how a business cycle mirrors the cycle of the season. As it begins to warm up in the more northern parts of the country, people’s thoughts turn to spending vacations elsewhere than a subtropical island at the southernmost end of the continental United States. Cruise ships are no different. Many have already begun their repositioning voyages and will no longer call into Caribbean ports for another six months. Some may journey through the Panama Canal and then up the West Coast for a few months of Alaska and Pacific Northwest tours. Others, like the Disney Magic will head across the Atlantic and stay in the Western Mediterranean for the summer and autumn. Some have taken to offer special “repositioning” cruises to passengers wishing to participate in these transoceanic voyages, harkening back to a time when travel across the globe by ship was the norm.

Members of the crew of these ships have become familiar faces and we have gotten to know quite a few of them over the months.

We hope the winds and the waves bring them safely to the next leg of their journey. This is also the time when many who work on the ships go on to new assignments or take vacations of their own. Just today, I was speaking with a Shore Excursions Associate from the Carnival Conquest who is now on board the Carnival Imagination, so she will be visiting us more frequently. Her manager on board the Imagination is taking a well-deserved vacation for one or two months. The team we deal with on board Royal Caribbean’s Majesty of the Seas has also changed hands. Looking at the calendar, the numbers of cruise ships that visit continue to diminish as we transition from our high season to low season. Not even two months ago, it was common to have more than one ship in town. Those days will only happen once or twice a month before we know it!

Staying Safe in the Southernmost City

by April Ruskowensky; Safety Officer - Key West Operations

So my first month on my own as Safety Officer for Key West Operations has been an interesting one. I’ve been learning the ropes and trying to find areas for improvement along the way. In that interest, the Conch Tour Train and the Old Town Trolley of Key West have joined together to create a joint safety committee that meets after work, once a month, to discuss incidents and accidents that have occurred over the past month and places we can improve on safety and how. It is an open forum for ideas and discussion and is representative of both companies with castmembers from varying positions. We have a small but mighty core group of dedicated people that I believe can really help make things safer in both our operations as a whole.

In other news, Old Town Trolley Key West had an excellent April on the safety front, with ZERO accidents or incidents to report!! They were aptly rewarded with ice cream cake, a nice touch since the heat and humidity are already brutal down here! On that note, we are reminding not only our castmembers, but our guests to stay hydrated. Key West heat is wet and sticky and also tricky. If your body isn’t accustomed to the humidity, it can sneak up on you out of nowhere. Keep those water bottles filled and those electrolytes replenished and you will be able to have a safe, fun time in this beautiful tropical paradise we here are lucky enough to be able to call home.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

APRIL
Veronica Brown, 12 years
Cesar Mreno, 9 years
Evan Whitley, 5 years

MAY
Suzanne Egle, 3 years
Brian Fox, 2 years
Jason Allen, 1 year
Jason Freeman, 1 year
Justin Bahl, 1 year
Roger Harmon, 1 year
I was born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. I trained to be a Medical Laboratory Technologist straight out of school and worked in Chemistry & Hematology for 15 years both in Winnipeg and Vancouver, British Columbia.

I also took up sailing in my late 20s which led me to give up my Med Lab career. I hopped aboard a sailboat and didn’t get off for 15 years. We lived aboard and sailed down the west coast, through Mexico, Central America & the Caribbean. I spent several years in Panama where I spent time being a line-handler and transited the Panama Canal 40 times.

It was also in Panama where I met my present husband and jumped ship. That led me back up to colder climates up the west coast of North America. We eventually made our home in Annapolis, Maryland for several years.

The cold became enough already so we decided to move as far south in this country as we could and still be able to work. We live three blocks from the Southernmost Point. My husband asked me, “Will that do?”

I love my job and couldn’t be happier doing what I do!

Q | What historical figure do you most identify with?  
A | Sacajawea – she was a trail blazer.
Q | What is the trait you most deplore in others?  
A | Dishonesty
Q | What is your favorite vacation spot?  
A | Mexico – all of it!
Q | What is your most treasured possession?  
A | My health
Q | What three things will you always find in my refrigerator?  
A | Eggs, swiss cheese, white wine – not necessarily in that order.

Guests staying at the tropical, light-filled Inn at Key West very quickly come to understand one thing: if they are looking for the very best things to do in Key West, they need look no further than the Island Concierge Services desk tucked over to one side of the welcoming lobby. There, surrounded by enticing colorful brochures and video streams of Key West fun, and always ready to help plan the perfect Key West adventure, are Millie and Bob Watson.

Having lived and worked in the Keys for 23 years, Millie and Bob bring a wealth of knowledge about Key West happenings to their guests. For their first seven years in the Keys, they were in the restaurant business, owners of the popular Island Reef Restaurant in Big Pine Key. Lured by the turquoise water all around them, Millie and Bob purchased a 47-foot sailboat which Bob captained on day and sunset sailing charters in the waters off Key West. During those seven years, Millie was the landlubber, perfecting her selling skills as a ticket sales representative for both the Old Town Trolley and Conch Tour Train. The high traffic, high visibility of those ticket booths involved constant interaction with guests who asked every question imaginable about what to see and do in Key West. It did not take long for Millie to become an expert.

As it often happens with long-time residents of the Keys, Millie and Bob got the itch to get off “the rock.” They went to Virginia to be near family, but within a year, the lure of the island brought them back! It was time to use their combined expertise to begin their own concierge business, Island Guest Service. They found the perfect spot – the Inn at Key West, where they have been for seven years. (In case you had not noticed, the number seven seems to be their magic number!)

On her days off, Millie loves to read, knit, and make crochet baby blankets, a handy hobby when you have seven (yes, seven) grandchildren. Bob, on the other hand, likes to refurbish boats. On their “bucket list”: to travel around the country in their newly purchased “humongous” RV – a 40-foot decked out motor coach!

The Inn at Key West is a welcoming place, and Millie and Bob fit right in. With its gingerbread architectural details lending it the island charm so distinctive of Key West, this boutique hotel and resort has tranquil guest rooms with rich wood, island-inspired furnishings. And, much to the delight of hotel guests, just beyond the lobby is a wonderful surprise. A large palm tree-shaded oasis of colorful tropical foliage surrounds a free-form swimming pool. Along with the poolside Tiki Bar and the alfresco Hammock Café, it’s the perfect place for a relaxed tropical respite after a day of enjoying all the island activities planned by Millie and Bob.
CONCH TOUR TRAIN

Bon Voyage Bill!
by Eva Conway, Conch Tour Train Operations Manager

Our winter season has come to an end. The snow birds are heading back home. Visits from cruise ships are slowing down as well as they head to other ports for the summer.

Now that it has slowed down tour guide Larry Clearman will be returning to Boston for his second summer as a tour guide. Another one of our tour guides, Danny Martin, will be heading to Boston as a tour guide this summer as well.

Andy Kirby is our new Cruise Ship Liaison. He has taken the position that was held by Bill McIntyre. Bill is moving closer to his daughters and grandchildren. He will be missed by everyone.

We had a retirement party for the Train Cruise Ship Liaison, Bill McIntyre on April 24th. Bill came to the Conch Tour Train after retiring from UPS. Bill has worked for the train for 10 ½ years. Bill started as an engineer for the Conch Tour Train and was promoted to Head Driver. Bill was Head driver for the train for 5 ½ years. Bill took on the new position of Conch Tour Train Liaison last year. Bill and his wife decided to move to Tampa, Florida to be closer to their family. We wish Bill the best of luck. He will be missed dearly.

The Conch Tour Train—It’s a Generational Thing!
by Tammy Oosterhoudt; Group Sales

Key West is a hot spot for destination weddings, and getting everyone to the church on time in style has become a mainstay of our CTT and OTT group charter business. Brides are fun to work with. Being part of this special day for families is rewarding, no matter how many times you set it up. While we get wonderful after-the fact letters, emails, and photos from our brides and their families telling us what a great time everyone had, once the bill is paid, they are back to reality — and we are busy working with the next bride... and the next. We never expect it to be a repeat business.

This year, the Conch Tour Train experienced a first: a second generation bride! This spring, I received a call inquiring about wedding transportation — one of many that day. It was a father who was in town to take care of arrangements for his daughter’s wedding. He and his wife wanted to meet in my office. Imagine my delighted surprise when he said, “I used your train for my wedding way back when, and I am here to arrange to have my daughter have the same experience!”

If you do it right, they will come again and again.

Bill McIntyre, Candy Jones and Marty Shoenneman having a good time.

New Driver Virginia Block helping with cruise ship shuttles.

New Driver Brandon Williams can’t wait to start giving tours.

Bill McIntyre opens gifts during the retirement party.

Bill McIntyre is all smiles with Danny Martin at the party.

Vicki Clark, J Knostman (New driver) and Lisa Woodman show guest where to buy tickets. J can’t wait to tell the stories of Key West and loves to meet new people.
Dr. Porter was the first doctor born in Key West, and went on to become one of the most outstanding men in Florida’s medical history. His family roots were in Virginia, where his mother was from the distinguished Randolph family. Her father, Captain Thomas Randolph was a US Navy officer commanding a cutter when he died in Key West at the age of 35 of yellow fever.

His father was Joseph Yates Porter I, a merchant in Charleston, VA, who had moved to Key West, married Mary Randolph, and in 1845 purchased a home on the corner of Caroline and Duval Streets in Key West. His uncle was a distinguished attorney in South Carolina who had served as that state’s Lt. Governor. Joseph Yates Porter I died on October 8, 1847 at the age of 30, only two weeks before his son was born on October 22, 1847.

Mary Porter stayed in Key West and in their family home to raise her only child, until her untimely death at the age of 30, when her son was 12 years old. Young Joseph was then raised by his grandmother, spending much of his time in Burlington, New Jersey. He attended the prestigious Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, where he graduated in 1870. Within a few months, he was appointed as acting assistant surgeon in the US Army and sent to Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas, just off Key West, where he spent three and a half years.

Yellow fever was a deadly disease, which Dr. Porter had experienced personally in 1867. Throughout his medical training, he had dealt with several cases of yellow fever, including an epidemic at Ft. Jefferson in 1873. He earned a reputation of managing the disease, which contributed to his promotion to assistant surgeon and then surgeon. He served in the Army until 1889, a total of 19 years, battling yellow fever in the Dry Tortugas, Key West, Tampa, Miami, and Texas. Upon his retirement, he was made the first State Public Health Officer of Florida, a position he held for 22 years. During his tenure, there were two epidemics of yellow fever in 1899 and 1905. His work in controlling yellow fever brought forth the discovery that mosquitoes carried the deadly disease. Through quarantine, establishing hospitals during epidemics, and resolving sanitation issues, he was able to eradicate yellow fever.

Dr. Porter married Louisa Curry, daughter of a prominent Key West family. They raised 2 daughters and 2 sons in Key West, where they lived in his family home until his death in 1927.
My life and that of my three siblings began on an Air Force base. We moved from base to base all over the world. Fate took my mom and dad by my 15th birthday, and I moved to Georgia to live with my uncle. After the Army and College, (University of North Florida), I came to Key West in 1977 to work at Florida Keys Medical Center as a Respiratory Therapist. I decided to change careers, so I became a chef. I seemed to have a knack for cooking and became executive chef for four separate venues over the next 30 years. My true love, after so many years on Cayo Hueso, became the island’s history. After retiring from professional cooking, my passion is now to drive the Conch Tour Train and talk about the most amazing place I could be blessed to live in. This truly is paradise, for me anyway.

**Q** | What is your idea of perfect happiness?
**A** | Good Health

**Q** | Which historical figure do you most identify with?
**A** | Charles Darwin

**Q** | Which living person do you most admire?
**A** | Dr. Windy Coles

**Q** | What do you consider your greatest achievement?
**A** | It is yet to happen

**Q** | What is your most treasured possession?
**A** | My teeth and my friends (It’s a close tie)

**Q** | What is your favorite occupation?
**A** | Teacher

**Q** | What three things will you always find in your refrigerator?
**A** | Egg beaters, whole butter and diet soda

**Q** | Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
**A** | Gilgamesh

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**Nala**

*Proud Owner: Taylor Sanderson; Sales Representative, Conch Tour Train*

Hi! This is my one and a half year old pit-bull named Nala (Yes, like Lion King)! I did not pick her name, my friend Maria who rescued her in Orlando, Fl. gave her that name. Maria gave me Nala because she didn’t have the time she thought she had to take care of her and wanted her to have a good home. I’ve had Nala for a little over six months and she’s one of the coolest dogs. My boyfriend has taught her how to sit, lay, come here, and wait he is currently trying to teach her how to drag palm fronds to the trash. Even though she would rather just run around with them in her mouth while doing circles around our sea grape tree. Her favorite things to do are ride in the car, chew up sticks, play with kids and cuddle up at night. She thinks she is a 50 pound laptop that just wants to get in your lap and give you love. I am very happy I rescued her.

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**HUMAN RESOURCE NEWS**

**CASTmember Self Service Registration**

**What is CASTmember Service?**
Employee Self Service is a web site that provides you with:
- Direct access to your personal and company information
- Unlimited access: 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Log in at any computer with internet access

**CASTmember Self Service Registration**
Enrollment in CASTmember Self Service is as simple as 1,2,3,4!
- Using a web browser go to http://portal.adp.com
- Click on **FIRST TIME USERS REGISTER HERE**
- Enter the Registration Pass Code: **HistoricTa-201**
- Complete the user registration steps

**Note:** Your USER ID will be your first initial + last name @historicta. Example: John Smith would be jsmith@historicta. Please use your home email address when registering.

**What Can You Access?**
- Personal information and check for accuracy
- View and print pay statements and W-2
- Link to benefit providers

**Q** | What is CASTmember Service?
**A** | Direct access to your personal and company information

**Q** | How does CASTmember Self Service work?
**A** | Enrollment is simple: 1,2,3,4!

**Q** | What does the Registration Pass Code do?
**A** | Provides access to the registration.

**Q** | What is the USER ID?
**A** | Your USER ID will be your first initial + last name @historicta.

**Q** | What can you access?
**A** | Personal information, pay statements, W-2, and benefit providers.

**Q** | How do I log in?
**A** | Log in at any computer with internet access.

**Q** | Where can I find more information?
**A** | Contact HR.Self.Service@historictours.com
Harry Truman Celebrates 129th Birthday
Paul Hilson; Harry Truman Little White House Events Coordinator

On a beautiful Key West evening we celebrated President Truman’s birthday. The party began the way the president began each day – with a shot of Old Granddad! This was followed by entertainment by Carmen Rodriguez and the Little White House Band who were joined by local favorite Bobby Nesbitt, as well as Debra and Patrick. On the North Lawn of the Little White House guests enjoyed the music and dancing under the stars, followed by birthday cake and a champagne toast.

Last year we celebrated in a more low-key fashion at Kelly’s Caribbean in a combination end-of-the season /birthday party. As Ed Swift was leaving that party he overheard a woman commenting that she heard people singing “Happy Birthday” and it was her birthday too. Ed invited her in to Kelly’s for some birthday cake.

This year, unknown in advance to us, that same young woman came to the party at the Little White House and we invited her, on her 33rd birthday to help cut the cake in honor of our 33rd president. Truly, you never know who will stop in.
Aquarium Gets a Makeover!
Greg Gerwin; Key West Aquarium General Manager

Did you know that the coral reef is one of the most diverse ecosystems, second only to the rainforest? This is just one of many subjects we educate our guests about here at the Key West Aquarium (KWAQ). The aquarium has delighted thousands of guests of all ages since 1935. As an important piece of Florida’s “living history”, we strive to balance the unique story of our facility while staying current with our programs and today’s technology. Over the past two years the KWAQ curator, Greg Gerwin, and his assistant curator, Genya Yerkes, have led their team in an ambitious overhaul of the exhibits and programs offered at the aquarium. We aspire to reach a broader audience with a fresh approach to learning, a combination of education and entertainment fondly known as “edutainment”. By blending our interactive exhibits with a one-on-one experience with our educators, our guests are able to learn about the environment while still having fun!

One of our largest successes this year has been our interactive Skype program offered to classrooms unable to physically visit Key West. Our dynamic educators introduce the children to all types of marine life including queen conchs, nurse sharks, sea turtles, and a lively octopus! The program is a hit and has enabled us to provide our historical aquarium with new options for outreach through technology. But that’s not all! To complete our goal of “edutainment” we have added Stingray Bay, a touch pool with cow-nose rays and southern stingray pups. Our guests are offered chances to feed the rays with our educators at scheduled times, as well as opportunities to volunteer to feed the nurse sharks during our daily guided tours and feedings. We also created a learning center, the Learning Cove, where guests can receive information about invasive species, shark awareness, responsible boating practices, and sustainable seafood options.

This summer we began a remodel of our Atlantic Shores exhibit, a 50,000 gallon living mangrove ecosystem that boasts a myriad of game fish, tropical fish, eels, a giant grouper, and a hawksbill sea turtle. We have put Greg's artistic abilities to work and he has painted several beautiful murals to complement the new decorative trees and vines that have been added for a striking visual effect. In addition, we are adding a thru way to the Sponge Market next door, enabling potential guests to take a peek at this beautiful exhibit to pique their interest. Finally, we recently completed re-tiling our touch tank at the entrance of the aquarium. Our touch tank is the first thing our guests see upon entering the aquarium and the transformation has breathed new life into this guest favorite.

As always, our dedicated staff is on hand to answer any questions our guests may have or even just to listen to their experiences. Our up close and personal approach to education is our most important method to connect with our guests, creating a memorable and enjoyable experience at the Key West Aquarium. Without our dedicated staff, none of this would be possible! We hope to see you soon so we can share all the wonderful developments we have made to this beloved piece of Key West history.
The Nation’s Storyteller

My name is Maury Ann Miller. I was born in Germany because my father was stationed there with the Air Force. I am German, Italian, Irish and American Indian. I think that makes me officially a mutt!

I have lived in over 25 states in the United States, and I have traveled to numerous countries in Europe. My family is originally from Virginia. I lived in Richmond, Virginia, for 30 years where I raised my two daughters and grew a large commercial construction company from the ground up. My daughters live in Tennessee where they went to college, and between them they have five children.

Four years ago I moved to Clearwater, Florida with my partner, Marsha Motes, and our three children and three dogs. We were both General Managers for two years with a door-to-door sales company. We trained, motivated, and managed sales teams of 20-30 people.

I learned so much about leadership and team building from my mentors there. It’s not enough to tell your employees or team members what you need them to do – it’s important that they want to do what needs to be done for you and for the company. I also learned a lot about myself, and how to dig deep when faced with extreme adversity.

My regional manager used to tell me when times were at their worst that, “the ox was in the ditch.” When farmers plowed fields with oxen, often the ox would veer off of the planned path and into the ditch. To get back on track, he said you must put your head down, focus, and push even harder, and soon you will persevere.

That company relocated us to West Palm Beach, FL, to open two new markets for them with AT&T, U-Verse, and Vonage, which we were successful in doing. I worked for Carnival Cruise Lines in Sales for over a year, and one weekend after a visit to the Keys, we decided to move to Key West. Two weeks later we were here.

Marsha and I saw a help wanted sign at Mac’s Sea Garden, we applied, and now we are both part of the HTA family.

Q | What is your idea of perfect happiness?
A | To work in a job that I love, and to live in a tropical place with the person that I love. I think I have succeeded.

Q | What historic figure do you most identify with?
A | Matthew Fontaine Maury. He was my maternal relative, and namesake. He was known as, “The Pathfinder of The Seas,” during the Civil War.

Q | What is your greatest fear?
A | Letting people down, or not doing a good enough job both personally and in the work place.

Q | What trait do you most deplore in other people?
A | Dishonesty

Q | What place would you most like to live?
A | Besides Key West, it would be San Diego, CA.
April-May 2013