Southernmost Ducks Open!

by Linda Test; Director of Key West Operations

Months of hard work from coast to coast, hours of driving around in circles, and countless re-writes to the script all culminated in a big SPLASH! The Southernmost Duck Tours have launched! As all avid readers of The Nation’s Storyteller know, this was a much anticipated event.

The San Diego maintenance team had primped and primed the Captain Courageous Duck, and it arrived in Key West beautifully painted and ready to go. We were fortunate to have Captain Jim Saffer transfer in from our San Diego Seals operation to take the lead. What I know about boats would not cause a thimble to overflow, and my Duck knowledge is even less, so I am thrilled to have Jim!

Our original first mate, Ken ‘KP’ Proper, was instrumental in completing the script, including adding sound bites to help tell the stories. Captain Porter helped in fine-tuning the route. We added two more first mates and two more captains, and were ready to go! We showed off our tour to our friends and family, then on November 19, 2012, we entertained our first 97 guests.

As the weeks have passed, we have added Alfalfa A. Duck, which came to us with someone else’s stickers, decals, and the wrong color. The Conch Tour Train maintenance team has turned Alfalfa into an HTA vehicle, with a complete makeover inside and out. Special kudos to Andrew Gryzch and Gabe George for making it as beautiful as its twin sister, Captain Courageous. With Alfalfa, we were able to operate hourly tours during our very popular tourist time between Christmas and New Year’s, and will continue that through the busy season. We now have Alfalfa’s sister, Emma Duck, who will be going through her own makeover to make her as lovely as the other two.
It’s all About the People, Stupid!

by Christopher Belland, CEO of Historic Tours of America

Back about a million years ago when we first went into the trolley business, we purchased the first “themed” vehicles that our company ever bought. We purchased six brand new trolleys from a guy in Kansas who built horse trailers in his season but then, to fill in the gap, started building trolleys. I thought, at the time, trolleys would be a very interesting vehicle to go against our arch competitor, the Conch Train. It worked! But, it really wasn’t the vehicles, it was the people and was a lesson I was to learn many times in my career.

Our first company, Old Town Trolley Tours of Key West, started on December 20, 1980. I hired 13 new employees (we didn’t call them CASTmembers then) and we went into business. It should have occurred to me more than it did that the reason we were successful was because of this very special group of people who not only enjoyed competing against the well-entrenched Conch Train, but simply enjoyed the work of showing off our little town.

The reason I bring this up is because the older I get, it is amazing how I continue to learn the same lessons over and over again. Our company, Historic Tours of America, recently invested somewhere in the neighborhood of $26 million to build what I consider the newest state-of-the-art attraction, if not in the United States then at least in Boston. It simulates the Old South Meeting House, has two fully researched and restored ships emulating the Eleanor and the Beaver, a museum that uses state-of-the art holographic projections, Harry Potter style Talking Portraits, one of only two known surviving tea crates on display and an award-winning film, “Let It Begin Here”. Abigail’s Tea Room upstairs has an extraordinarily colonial feel about it but it is as comfortable as any restaurant in town with a million dollar view out of the window. Finally, the retail store comes complete with three-dimensional Monte Triz statues, reproduced 18th century engravings surrounding the ceiling, portraits, ships models and the HTA retail treatment down below. Taken together, the place is a thing of beauty and should make us all very proud.

What makes it stand apart from all the other incredible attractions in Boston, however, is not so much the amazing facility as it is the amazing people. The CASTmembers at the Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum are all in 18th century costumes and most of them are trained and experienced actors as opposed to weekend re-enactors who do it as a hobby. They bring a youthful enthusiasm, a dramatic element of style and a hungry knowledge to know more about the Revolutionary War history of the period and to put on a show that quite literally astounds our guests. Trip Advisor reviews for the Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum are wonderful because they have been such that we have been elevated to the #26 attraction in the city in only a few months. The real thing of beauty is, however, our comment cards. I read every single one, both good and bad (of which there are very few), for the Tea Party in order to try to understand how we might change and make better what we have accomplished. Most of the comment cards say, “Change nothing, it’s perfect the way it is”, but almost every single comment card carries with it the name of one of our incredible actors as having made history come alive for people’s children and grandchildren and it is something they are going to tell every visitor to Boston that THIS is a must see when they visit.

Disney even said, “You can build the finest amusement park but your success comes down to the people who run it.” He was right and so were we. I want to congratulate the three people responsible for hiring, training and motivating this incredible troupe of actors. They are Evan O’Brien, Kelly Horan and Josiah George. They were there from the beginning and it was their vision of how these actors should be trained and how they should comport themselves with our guests. They took the advice of Leona Helmsley and did not have to train people to be nice but hired a bunch of nice people. Our acting troupe at the Boston Tea Party is, and I say this without exaggeration, the finest of their kind and without question, the most important asset of the Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum, “the single most important event leading to the American Revolution.” It should go without saying that all of HTA is special because of our people. Each one, whether on stage or behind the scenes, has a role to play.

The Art of Storytelling, it is Who we Are

Sometimes it is easy to lose sight of what our company is all about. When you do something over and over, day after day, week after week, month after month and year after year, it is probably the one thing we need to guard against most.

Storytelling is part of all of us and, in fact, is a part of everyone. Stories are what we first hear as children. We hear stories virtually every day of our lives and don’t even recognize them as such. When we listen to the news we are listening to numerous stories about what is going on in our world. The newspaper is a collection of stories. When we go to the movies, we are going to experience stories. Stories are the way experiences and knowledge are communicated from one human to another and because of this it is an extremely important facet of social relationships. Those who tell stories are among the most valued members of society, whether they are news reporters, movie stars or the tour and attraction CASTmembers of HTA.

We once had a trainer in Washington, DC by the name of Ed Pacilio. I was always impressed by the fact that when he was teaching new conductors the tour “facts” he wove them into something he called the “golden thread”. His point was that everything that happened in the past, whether it was a natural or social occurrence,
The President’s 2013 Message
by Ed Swift III; President of Historic Tours of America

By the time you read this 2013 will be rolling along and we will know if the world has fallen off the fiscal cliff. If we didn’t fall of the cliff I suspect there will be some new crisis to entertain us and the media. Looking back to 1973 when Moe Mosher and Chris Belland and I started restoring buildings on Duval Street and to 1976 when Old Town Trolley became ours and 1978 when we restored the Key West Aquarium, and 1980 when we purchased our first modern street Trolleys and 1983 when we arrived in Boston and on and on up until today we have always faced crises along the way. Through troubled economies, hurricanes, blizzards, foreign attacks, political turmoil etc. we have maintained belief in our ability to adapt and survive. The most recent meltdown of our economy was preceded in years past by interest rates of 18% in the early 80’s and three or four recessions, and the failure of banks, savings and loans and all sorts of national calamities from the Mariel Boat Lift, the Twin Towers, fires, lawsuits, the Cuban Missile Crisis, falling housing prices, rising housing prices, deflation, inflation, the nation running out of gas, the Big Dig and on and on.

Looking back on the 70’s, 80’s, 90’s and now the 10’s it does occur to me, after 50 plus years of active business engagement, that these moments of crises are ever present and somewhat continuous. For quite a while I really thought that with proper planning, good budgeting and foresight, born of experience, our company could tame the unexpected and somehow be prepared to avoid the next ill wind that would blow in. Today I feel very lucky to be afloat in what continues to be a business atmosphere of uncertainty. I really don’t feel particularly well prepared for whatever the next trial will be but I do know it’s coming. I think that the following perspectives are what I have learned over the decades. I wanted to share them with you.

1. You cannot select your crisis but you can select who you surround yourself with. Keep those good people around you. In crisis experience helps, integrity helps, loyalty helps. These are the real strengths of Historic Tours of America.
2. There is a Chinese saying that goes like this, “Crisis is opportunity riding the dangerous wind.” I have never seen a crisis that in retrospect did not cause positive change and new opportunity. For example, the Tea Party burned down and the new Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum rose from the ashes. Truly without the fire we would not have been able to start anew and plan anew which has resulted in a superior guest experience. Every economic downturn has brought recovery and opportunity to expand, to buy competitors or acquire new ticket locations, property or storefronts. When we started the 1980 season in Key West with a new six trolley fleet we did not have the advantage of good ticket locations so we pioneered the continuous loop tour (hop-on hop-off) to take the trolley’s to the hotels and attractions to get to our potential customers directly. Seeing the competitive advantage while the crisis is going on is very difficult but what doesn’t kill you has the potential to make you stronger and better.
3. Disaster is unexpected but should not be as it is inevitable. Throwing ones hands up, giving up, is always an alternative but keeping our collective heads in the storm and staying the course, adapting and working our way through these road bumps in life and business has become a hallmark of Historic Tours of America. It’s not easy but being a strong team in crisis has allowed us to hand out the 20, 25, 30, 35 and even a few 40 year pins to our CAST. There is a great satisfaction in this. “We’re still here.”
4. Believing that what we do and how we do it makes a difference in our lives and our guests’ lives. Truly, truly having a purpose beyond making money is as important as making money. Our 100% money back guarantee, the commitment to “making vacations better”, the fact that we care about each guest and the fact that from the ticket seller to the CO to the retail manager to the tour conductor we strive to entertain, impart and tell the good and the positive true history of our cities and our country. These things have produced guest loyalty to sustain us during the crises and a base to re-build on afterwards. I believe we are universally committed to treating each other and our guests with the care, respect and helpfulness that we ourselves would like to receive on vacation. We treat others as we would like to be treated and in the process have built a good way to earn a living and survive and prosper.

As we pass through 2013 may our crises be limited and may we face them all with that Historic Tours of America attitude of perseverance and positiveness which has been built over the past 40 years. Happy New Year!
BOSTON

Boston’s “Slow Season” is Anything But Slow

by Matthew Murphy; General Manager

We think of Boston’s “off season” as being a time when business slows down considerably and the trolleys are riding around with many fewer guests. While this is true to an extent, this winter is a little different, thanks to a special winter promotion that was put into place starting November 1st, in partnership and cooperation with our sister operation, the brand new Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum. The decision was made to include FREE admission to the Museum with every Boston Old Town Trolley ticket over the winter months. The results have been extremely rewarding for both the Trolley and the Museum: the Trolley’s ridership in the month of December was up 22% over the previous December, and we expect January to show a similar increase. The museum enjoyed a volume of admissions and sales in the gift shop that would not have been at the same levels without the winter promotion, so it was a win-win for all involved! Many thanks to our fellow CASTmembers at the Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum for their cooperation and participation, and for providing a fantastic experience to the guests!

The “off-season” is also when much work is being done behind the scenes to prepare for the next season. I’ll let our individual Leadagers fill you in on the details of their latest activities, but suffice it to say that in the midst of the winter we are hiring and training new tour conductors, working on our budget and strategy for the coming season, doing vehicle maintenance projects that were put off until time allowed, putting together our new Free Map and other promotional materials, scouting out new sales locations, strengthening our relationships with hotels, and….well the list goes on and on. We’re very excited about all the pieces that are being put into place for an exciting and successful 2013. Read on to learn more about what’s been happening here in “The Cradle of Liberty.” And here’s wishing you and yours a bright and happy New Year!

Operations Report

by John Welby; Operations Manager

There’s one thing about being in Operations that is true any month of the year, there is always something that needs to get done. The upside to it is that there is never a dull moment and the work day flies by! As you accomplish one task there’s always another waiting and the “To Do” list never quite goes away, it just gets rearranged. Here are just some of the items I’ve been involved with over the last several months.

In an effort to promote the wonderful new Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum, new signage has been added to our Waterfront Welcome Center and Marriott Long Wharf sales depots. Designed by Erika Jacoby at Black Dog Advertising, these dynamic new graphics do a great job of getting the word out about Boston’s newest and most fascinating attraction.

Fall foliage season is the busiest time of year around here for cruise ships. In the month of October alone Cruiseport Boston saw twenty two ships making port calls. That is in addition to the numerous vessels using Boston as a port of embarkation. The Carnival Glory returned to Boston in 2012 for its third and best season thus far for Old Town Trolley Tours of Boston. Thanks to the hard-working Shore Excursion staff (Adam, Fabian and Tyler) we broke all previous cruise ship sales record with this ship and our sales increased 48% over 2011! We averaged an astonishing 711 guests per call on this one ship alone. We ended our cruise season on October 8, 2012 and set a new cruise ship sales record of 785 guests off a single ship in one day, not a bad way to end the season. Boy, have we come a
and customer service. Carnival Cruise Lines was so impressed that currently working with OTT-Boston were very happy with our products very productive and successful show for HTA. All of the cruise lines double-team them, we triple and quadruple-teamed them. It was a done, the cruise lines didn’t know what hit them! We didn’t just representation of Historic Tours of America. By the time we were pleased with the entire team (Leslie Nagy, Cheryl Desimone, Cathy Hutchinson, Richie “Buzz” Sheridan and Donnie Kraby) that work inside the terminal happily assisting those scores of guests. It is truly a team effort to accomplish such incredible sales. Also helping in the effort were our talented Ghosts & Gravestones staff (Meg Feczko, Ryan Jennings, Dara Poulton, Kimberly Gravestones staff (Meg Feczko, Ryan Jennings, Dara Poulton, Kimberly Gravestones staff (Meg Feczko, Ryan Jennings, Dara Poulton, Kimberly Barrett, and Nicole Parrish) who served as customer service reps/crowd control agents. Thank you, thank you, and thank you to all. Our cruise ship season may end in the fall, but that’s also when the planning begins for next season. Once again, I had the pleasure of representing Old Town Trolley Tours of Boston and the Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum. Our Waterfront Welcome Center, located near the New England Aquarium and Faneuil Hall Marketplace, served as the launching point for our Seaport Tour, and provided free transportation to the new Welcome Center, located near the New England Aquarium & Museum. As the signs in the pictures indicate, we added new signage to the Welcome Center to help promote our sister attraction. One the most exciting developments of our season in Boston was the re-opening of the Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum. Our Waterfront Welcome Center, located near the New England Aquarium and Faneuil Hall Marketplace, served as the launching point for our Seaport Tour, and provided free transportation to the new Museum. As the signs in the pictures indicate, we added new signage to the Welcome Center to help promote our sister attraction. Long way. Seven years ago, when we got our first Royal Caribbean ship, we would be thrilled if we carried 300 guests. Now we’re looking at twice that. Of course, tremendous sales like this don’t happen without the help of many people. A big “Thank You” goes out to all of the tour conductors and actors who gave the tours and also to the entire team (Leslie Nagy, Cheryl Desimone, Cathy Hutchinson, Richie “Buzz” Sheridan and Donnie Kraby) that work inside the terminal happily assisting those scores of guests. It is truly a team effort to accomplish such incredible sales. Also helping in the effort were our talented Ghosts & Gravestones staff (Meg Feczko, Ryan Jennings, Dara Poulton, Kimberly Barrett, and Nicole Parrish) who served as customer service reps/crowd control agents. Thank you, thank you, and thank you to all.

Our cruise ship season may end in the fall, but that’s also when the planning begins for next season. Once again, I had the pleasure of representing Old Town Trolley Tours of Boston and the Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum at the annual Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association conference. It was held on the beautiful island of Curacao, October 1st to 5th.

This year I had the privilege of attending with Ed and Nancy Swift, Chris Belland, Piper Smith and Linda Test. It was quite an impressive representation of Historic Tours of America. By the time we were done, the cruise lines didn’t know what hit them! We didn’t just double-team them, we triple and quadruple-teamed them. It was a very productive and successful show for HTA. All of the cruise lines currently working with OTT-Boston were very happy with our products and customer service. Carnival Cruise Lines was so impressed that they asked us to develop more products for them to sell. The show ended with a big extravaganza held on the harbor in downtown Willemstad overlooking the iconic Dutch-colonial buildings.

November was upon us before we knew it and with it our transitioning into off-season mode. It’s during this time that the projects never end. The cruise ship season is barely over and I am already working on contracts for next year. Each cruise line requires mountains of paperwork which is very time consuming. Next comes hiring and training of new conductors. We got an early start this year and had four new conductors in our first class which began December 4th, the day before our holiday party. Thank you to head conductor, Donnie Kraby (Head Conductor), John “Irish” Feeley, Jennifer “J” Labarre, Michael “The Bear” Giobbe, Gordon “Gordy” Fitz, Michael “Cannon” Buchanon, Brian “Buck” Buckley, Michael “Miles” Long, General Manager Matthew Murphy, and Justin “J. D.” Mass. Congratulations to all our safety-conscious conductors for a terrific job!

The Ghosts & Gravestones CASTmembers showed up en masse at Old Town Trolley’s holiday party, although some had trouble recognizing them out of their ghost-host costumes. It must be said that they were among the most active and enthusiastic participants on the dance floor. By the way, the guy pictured above proudly wearing a crown is our Actor of the Year, Will Munoz, who contributed to the G&G experience in innumerable ways this season. Thank you to one and all!

It’s not only our gravediggers/actors that dress up for Halloween. Even our conductors and sales reps got into the act. Showing off their Halloween costumes, left to right, are Stephen Kent, Brian Roylance, Patty Wicker, Deb Kelley, Russ Kelley, and J. Labarre.

To drive safely through the streets of Boston (given the cabs, bicycles, double-parked cars, delivery vehicles, and the rest!) is quite a feat. So hats off to the safe drivers pictured here. Left to right are: Sue Pye (Safety and Training Officer), Donnie Kraby (Head Conductor), John “Irish” Feeley, Jennifer “J” Labarre, Michael “The Bear” Giobbe, Gordon “Gordy” Fitz, Michael “Cannon” Buchanon, Brian “Buck” Buckley, Michael “Miles” Long, General Manager Matthew Murphy, and Justin “J. D.” Mass. Congratulations to all our safety-conscious conductors for a terrific job!

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December 2012 - January 2013
Office Manager Report
by Cheryl DeSimone; General Manager

We have a great group of administrative assistants here in Boston and I am lucky to have them help with our work load. Currently Katie, Constance and I are all South Boston girls, born and raised in Southie, and John, well, he isn’t a Southie guy but he is fitting in just fine and is managing to understand our South Boston accents!

Katie Cunio is my Human Resource Administrative Assistant and has been here a full year this past November. She made it through her first season handling the HR responsibilities and her role and responsibilities just keep expanding. She handles all the paperwork (hiring, drug test, MVR’s, etc.) in our office and she is so perfect for HR thanks to her honesty, integrity, and attention to detail. She is helping me get ready for what promises to be a spectacular 2013 season. I’m also very proud of the fact that Katie was recognized as Supporting CASTmember of the Year at our holiday party….congratulations!

John Speck is my finance administrative assistant, even though there isn’t a job description for this position (yet)! John joined us in September and proved to be very smart with computers, crunching numbers, and much more! Because of that, John is currently handling the entire AP matching and batching, statement matching and AMEX coding. I plan to have John handle the daily recaps and end of month reports as well as typing and coding invoices in the upcoming weeks to make him my finance go-to person!

Constance Zeybek joined us in November and is our Director of First Impressions, a position that she fits perfectly! She has such a warm, friendly phone manner that sometimes people don’t want to end the call with her because she is so nice! Constance is going to be our special projects person, and her first big assignment is helping Bob Gibson maintain the all-important vehicle files.

It’s hard to find good people these days and I am grateful that I found three! Thank you to my wonderful administrative assistants for all of their hard work and for being awesome!

New Lifts!
by Bob Gibson; Vehicle Maintenance Manager

We have had a busy fall again, with cruise ship people and leaf peepers packing the trolleys, and the sheer amount of time the vehicles spent on the road took its usual toll. On a sad note, trolley #54 has been decommissioned and is being parted out and disassembled; it seems like the true passing of a era. Once again it’s been time to “Winterize” a portion of our fleet. We have gone through another fall of removing the Issenglass and installing the winter windows, which is quite a process. Just as a reference, each of the four window panels in the ten Molly trolleys weighs 450 pounds: just try holding one of those over your head! Believe me, all the other locations should be grateful this is a Boston-only tradition! We are in the process of tweaking the recently purchased “Supreme” trolleys, making them our own. Speaking of the Supremes (the trolleys, not the singing group), we have had to make an equipment update to handle the length and weight of these forty-foot sightseeing vehicles. Thanks to Ed Swift IV and our other corporate officers for helping us to acquire a very high tech set of four independent lifts. These lift units are very mobile, allowing us to lift vehicles in different locations, and they are able to accommodate the size and weight of the new Supremes. Please see the picture…..they’re really very cool!

The Chocolate Tour is Upon Us!
by Steven Johnson; Ghosts & Gravestones and Specialty Tour Manager

Greetings from Boston! As winter begins, it’s easy to think of the upcoming cold months as a chance to breath, relax and prepare for the upcoming season. This is not the case for all of us at OTT Boston however. When November 1st hits our gears shift and we start planning for the One and Only Chocolate Tour! Our famous tour of the best desserts and treats Boston has to offer.

Being the newest member of the management team here in Boston, this is a very exciting time for me. The Chocolate Tour is new territory (after spending years managing Ghosts & Gravestones Boston) and the hard work done by previous management to make such a great and engaging tour gives me much to live up to. The Chocolate Tour is an excellent product and has much room to grow and expand.

This year we have an outstanding line-up of top notch restaurants and chocolatiers who’ve partnered with us to help give everyone an excellent time. First, guests enjoy a dessert at the world famous “Top of the Hub” restaurant while taking in the panoramic views of Boston from fifty-two stories up! We then venture over to one of the oldest hotels in Boston, the Omni Parker House, for some Boston crème pie. The tour ends at the Langham Hotel for a forty-five minute chocolate buffet. During the tour, guests are given a chance to win a prize from Beacon Hill Chocolates, recently voted the best Chocolatier in Boston!

A great deal of energy goes into training and teaching the new guy and I’m grateful to the management of OTT Boston for their time and dedication. The Chocolate Tour is getting reservations and starting off strong and it wouldn’t happen without the excellent team we have up here in the North.
**Depot Sales**

*by Ed Doerr; Depot Sales Manager*

The Boston depot sales team reached a peak of 29 members this past season. This includes the six concierge staff at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel, which was a new addition this year. We’re very proud to serve as the primary guest service contact for his beautiful, historic hotel, and the team at the Park Plaza has done a superb job in their first official season operating under Old Town Trolley’s leadership. Special thanks are due to Paul Sullivan, who serves as the main liaison between the hotel and OTT.

As October came to an end our official “in season” was also drawing to a conclusion. The last port of call cruise ship of the year was in on November 1st.

The cruise ship passengers are a big part of what makes our September and October so busy and so much fun. They are always “wowed” by all that Boston has to offer, and our sales reps do a terrific job of convincing them that the Old Town Trolley is hands-down THE BEST way to see the city.

We also closed down our seasonal depots and several of the reps took the winter off. We hope and expect to see them all back in the spring, rested and energized for a great new season in 2013. Also, at the end of October one of our very respected and loved sales reps moved on to retirement. Tom “Ziggy” Pelletier hung up his OTT Boston jacket and hat and moved with his beautiful wife to their retirement home in South Carolina. Ziggy, your professionalism on the job and your entertaining comment card readings at morning briefings will be missed.

To conclude our season we also named our sales rep of the Year. Five year veteran, top sales producer and master of several languages, Deb Kelley, received the much deserved award. Deb is one of the most welcoming people in our company, always eager to not only help guests but also to coach and mentor the new sales reps that come in each year, helping them to “learn the ropes.” Congratulations, Deb, and thank you for all your hard work and professionalism!

**In Training...**

*by Sue Pye; Safety Training Officer*

The training season is in full swing and it is only January 8th! Four new conductor trainees are hard at work, having started in with the training program on December 4th. Will Redding and Rich Cole came to us with their CDL’s already so they are working hard on getting the script learned. The other two are Elaine Orsillo and Bob Remick and they have been busy preparing to obtain their CDL license. (In fact, as I write this their test is tomorrow, so good luck!) Then they will work the script and loop hard and get out there giving tours soon.

Because we have been so cold here in Boston it is especially hard to train at the range this time of year so thanks to Elaine and Bob for putting up with the cold as well was the Lead Conductors that have helped out at the cold, hard wasteland that we call the training range: thanks to Donnie Kraby, Michael “Bear” Giobbe and Jeff Semeraro. I could not have done it alone. Burr... the wind over there is brutal. Thank goodness for the “Hot Hands” hand and feet warmers...they are amazing.

On the safety front we have successfully avoided hitting anything out on the mean streets of Boston since September!! Keep up the great, observant driving, dear Boston conductors. Thanks to one and all for the good work.

**Pitching In!**

*by Donnie Kraby; Head Conductor*

What a season! Our typical staffing number for tour conductors lies somewhere between 45 and 50. Last season due to a number of illnesses, job changes, and natural attrition, by mid-season we were down to about 37 drivers. The effort that these men and women put in was inspiring. Taking on extra shifts, doing back to backs, coming to work while not feeling the best, etc. made me feel very proud, both of the individuals and the entire tour conductor team.

It can get hot and humid around here in July and August and when a conductor is performing four and sometimes five loops a day (and our loop is approximately one hour and 45 minutes), four days a week, it can really wear people down. Our dispatchers, conductors...
and sales people pulled together to get the job done and displayed
the kind of professionalism that you rarely see in our industry (or any
other type of industry for that matter).

Helping us accomplish our goal was Conductor of the Year
Michael Buchanan, who defines the words “upbeat and enthusiastic”
both on tour and off. Larry Clearman was our Rookie of the Year and
came to us from Key West as a Conch Train driver and did a great job
learning the script and a new city—Congrats to both these guys. As we
approach our next busy season we are well underway in auditioning
and training new conductors to augment the great core of people we
already have. Our conductors will make wonderful mentors and will
lead by example. In life or business when one gets through something
that is extremely difficult, he or she can look back and smile with
pride, and for us we will remember the summer of 2012 as a time we
all “pitched in”.

Holiday Happenings
in Group Sales!

by Leslie Nagy; Group Sales

Old Town Trolley Boston provides two trolleys over three days for
the Mayor of Boston for his annual Christmas Tree Lightings. The
trolleys, heralded by Sue Pye, Charlie Person, Ted Tompkins, and
John Wylie, bring Mayor Menino and his elfs to the various towns
throughout the city to ceremoniously turn on the Christmas Tree
lights. Unfortunately, the Mayor of Boston fell ill this year and was
unable to attend. But a good time was still had by all.

Also over the holidays, we provided three trolleys for Catholic
Charities through a community organization called Laboure. The
trolleys brought guests through the city of South Boston, our home
town, to view the various decorated houses while raising money
for a good cause. Thanks to Sue Pye and Charlie Person again, and
also Michael Buchanan. We additionally provided six trolleys
in the City of Somerville MA for
their decorated house tours.

Speaking about good will, we
joined up with Special Olympics
for two of their Jolly Jaunts. We
were able to provide a vehicle,
driven by Charlie Person, where
runners could rest and gather
energy.

And, lastly for the holiday
festivities, Michael Long and
Bob Eaton were part of the City of
Boston’s Annual First Night
festivities. This year was Boston’s
37th First Night Procession. We
are looking forward to 2013 and
the New Year!
Born and bred in New England, I studied History and Classics at the University of Massachusetts and Boston College. I entered the magical world of tour guiding as a “step-on guide” for the motor coach industry. It’s so much fun to welcome visitors to Boston and to show them our most interesting and beautiful places. One particular delight is to conduct walking tours of the city in period costume.

My employment at Old Town Trolley started in 2006 when I answered an advertisement for tour conductor. I discovered a whole new career doing what I love best in company with an eclectic group of friendly, talented, and interesting people.

My most memorable travel experience outside New England was the year and a half that I spent on the Mediterranean island of Crete. I lived a few short kilometers from the ruins of Knossos. Many scholars believe that this ancient Minoan city was the basis for the legends of Atlantis. Now, I take my pleasures closer to home. My hobbies are history, Greek mythology, and masterpiece painting.

**Q** Which historical figure do I most identify with?
**A** Benjamin Franklin

**Q** Which talent would I most like to have?
**A** The ability to speak several foreign languages

**Q** What is my most treasured possession?
**A** My sizable collection of books

**Q** If there was one place you could live besides your current city, where would it be?
**A** Ireland

**Q** Who are my favorite writers?
**A** Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ernest Hemingway, and David McCullough
In Boston we have twenty trolley stops but number three, for USS Constitution and the USS Constitution Museum, is by far the most popular, and with very good reason. This is the home port of USS Constitution. She was built for the US Navy in the years 1794 – 1797 and is the oldest commissioned battleship afloat in the world today. She is best known for serving in the War of 1812 and her battle on August 19, 1812 against the HMS Guerriere. Her cannons set fire to the Guerriere and sank her in thirty five minutes. It was in this battle that USS Constitution got her nickname. Her sides are made of iron! Actually, they are made of Georgian oak and copper from Paul Rever’s copper mill, but it worked and that is how she got the nickname “Old Ironsides”. Later that year she went on to defeat the HMS Java, and in 1815 the HMS Cyane and HMS Levant. The warship USS Constitution, and the new United States of America, was now a force to be taken seriously.

To honor USS Constitution and keep her stories alive, the USS Constitution Museum was founded as a non-profit organization on April 8, 1976. While there is a suggested admissions donation, the museum is free to the public. All money earned in donations and the Museum gift shop goes towards funding the museum and its many award winning exhibits. Old Town Trolley Tours proudly plays a part in their fundraising efforts. They have sold Old Town Trolley Tours tickets in the gift shop since 2004. This has helped raise thousands of dollars toward the operations of this gem of a museum.

The USS Constitution Museum is proud of the fact that their exhibits are geared to all age levels. Their exhibit, All Hands on Deck: A Sailor’s Life in 1812 is an interactive display that invites visitors to learn about and partake in life upon the USS Constitution. You can scrub the deck, furl a sail in gale force winds, crawl into your hammock, and meet David Debias, an eight year old African American boy who joined the crew in 1812.

Have you ever wondered what the War of 1812 was about or why it mattered? In the newly opened Old Ironsides War of 1812 Discovery Center you can explore this forgotten war and its most famous ship, the USS Constitution.

When you are in Boston, make sure to visit the USS Constitution Museum and, of course, the warship USS Constitution itself. Stop by the Museum gift shop and say hello to Chris White, Jim Banfield, and the wonderful staff that help support the Museum. While there you may purchase pens made of wood removed from USS Constitution during her overhaul. Remember, all money goes to the funding of the USS Constitution Museum, a very worthy cause.

For more information about Museum and the USS Constitution, check out their website, www.ussconstitutionmuseum.org for their online exhibits and general information, www.allhandsondeck.org for their All Hands on Deck: Learning Adventures Aboard “Old Ironsides” and ussmc.blogspot.com for their blog where you can learn of the USS Constitution and daily happenings at the Museum.
It’s become something of a tradition at Boston’s Holiday Party each year for the General Manager to express his thanks in the form of some hastily composed doggerel. Every year, I think I’ll never be able to come up with yet another rhyming tribute to our fantastic CAST. But somehow in the final hours leading up to the party, inspiration overtakes me and yet another example of truly excruciating rhymes and puns rises from off the page (or sinks, as the case may be).

There once were some trolleys in Boston (a city quite different from Austin).
They showed all the sights
From the depths to the heights,
And they rarely if ever got lost in.

They go by the name Old Town Trolley,
Manufactured by a company called Molly.
They were made up in Maine
But it’s perfectly plain
That Boston’s their true home, by golly.

But trolleys alone aren’t the answer.
It’s our CAST that’s the real enhancer,
They’re the ones whose hard work
Without going berserk
Is as graceful as a Boston Ballet dancer.

The trolleys are always kept gleaming
By a group that you never hear screaming.
I speak here of cleaners
With cheerful demeanors
And no thought of ever daydreaming.

And how ‘bout those folks in the office
Whose phone manner borders on flawless.
The tasks they fulfill
And their cheerful goodwill
Is consistent, even when they feel nauseous.

So here’s to the sales reps merry,
Selling tickets to guests that we carry.
In all kinds of weather,
Alone or together,
They accomplish so much that it’s scary.

They are focused on breaking their goals
Their hard work and efforts one extols.
With upgrades aplenty,
Sometimes ten, sometimes twenty,
And as rovers they make the patrols.

And keeping the trolleys in motion
Are mechanics who show great devotion
To fixing our engines
With best of intentions
And not making a fuss or commotion.

And here’s to the actors so ghostly
Who make the G&G tour mostly
A spooky affair,
Yet with humor to spare,
Performing in a manner quite hostly.
They’re unique these thespian actors,
And they succeed by a variety of factors.
Their costumes and make-up,
And the way that they shake up
With energy like nuclear reactors.

And the sales team elite
The women that can’t be beat:
I mean Leslie, and Beth, and Cathy.
As we work to beat all competition,
These gals are our best ammunition.
Pushing charters galore
Or rallying vendors to “sell more,”
To not thank them would be a serious omission.

Yes it’s been quite a year filled with issues.
There were days when I needed a box of tissues.
But as the year ends,
And see all of these friends,
I think gosh, but I’m sure gonna miss ya.
Of course some you will work through the winter,
And forge on like a long distance sprinter.
Whether you stay or you go,
I want you to know
Each one of you in my book’s a winner.

So here’s a warm holiday greeting,
For a 2012 that was so fleeting.
You were put to the test
And proved you’re the best.
Now let’s give out awards and start eating.
**WASHINGTON, DC**

**Depot Sales**

*by Abe Burgos; Charter and Group Sales Manager*

Well this is a new year and on January 3rd we had a new Congress. That’s pretty much what the city is buzzing about. Every January we get new residents moving to town. Some move to the heart of the city. Some can’t afford that so they move to the suburbs in Maryland and Virginia. So I say to them welcome Capitol Hill staffers. If you want to take a tour, come to Old Town Trolley. If you want a milkshake go to Good Eats. And if you want a sandwich, go to Magliardo’s. Yumm-o!

All along Pennsylvania Ave they are starting to put up bleachers for the Inauguration Day parade. They’ve also published the road closures for the day before and day of Inauguration. This list is insane! We cannot operate tours on either days. Four years ago, numbers totaled almost two million people in town for the inauguration. This year is a mere 700,000. Of course doubles Washington DC’s population. And it’s a holiday weekend. So that means Friday traffic is going to be horrible!

You know you have lived in DC too long when you are focused more on the rush hour commute than on history. But yes, it’s true. Many native Washingtonians are more concerned about the timeline of RGIII’s return than we are in Barack Obama’s return to the White House. No offense to Mr President. But we do have offense with RGIII. And it’s about time.

We have remodeled our office. How cool is that? We used to have a sea green colored carpet. We now have hardwood laminate floors. The recap room has been newly remodeled as well as new desks for a few of our leadagement staff.

As I write this our very own Leah Bryant, co-director of First Impressions, is expecting her first child later this month. We even threw her a surprise baby shower. Leah, we all wish you nothing but the best for your baby boy.

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**Someone’s Not in the Kitchen with Lolo!**

*by Loletta Edwards; Head Conductor*

Hey everybody! I hope everyone had a great holiday feast. Holidays are not just the time to give unto others, but in my home, the holidays are a time to eat. There’s a rule: if it’s not nailed down, it’s going in my belly.

I had a great plan. I decided to cook the holiday dinner myself. Not just cook a little, but instead I would cook an entire feast. I arrived at the grocery store loaded with anticipation with list in hand ready to spend some hard earned trolley dollars. I bought it all. Not the entire store but at least two thirds of it. My shopping cart had a 26 pound turkey, a nine pound ham, 15 sweet potatoes, two pounds of greens, three boxes of elbow noodles, two blocks of cheese, 18 eggs, oh my gosh, if you name it, I had it.

Now…how do you cook a turkey? Being that I have never partaken in preparing a potluck predominantly presenting palatable picturesque plates of prime turkey (Sorry, I couldn’t think of a word meaning turkey that begins with “p”). You’re impressed aren’t you?, I decided to ask some of my co-workers how to cook a turkey. This should have been a hint from the food gods that I was not ready. Anyway, the best recipe that I found was from Ron Dickson. And I thank him for his expertise.

So the day of the feast arrives. I wake up at five am to start the prep. And I knew that this was going to be a long night. After slaving away over a hot stove for five, nine, 12, one billion hours, everything was finally cooked. The mashed potatoes were mashed. The sweet potatoes were yammed. The greens were collard. And it was time to dig in.

Like a proud parent, I took a spoonful of mac and cheese. Um…there was about two cups of milk at the bottom of the pan. And I ran out of cheese. And it was burned on the top. How humiliating. No one eat the mac and cheese!! I’ll serve the ham. Um…the ham was overglazed. I had put the whole bottle of glaze over the ham. Ever heard of ham hocky? No one eat the deviled eggs were—um…they tasted rotten. No one eat the deviled eggs!!

The stuffing was fine, the greens were good, and the yams were yummy. But my family and friends who were my guests that day promised never to return as long as I am cooking. How rude!

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**Congratulations Nazha Salhi!**

*by Bob Norris; Business Manager*

Congratulations to Nazha Salhi for her promotion to Human Resources Specialist in December 2012! A reception was held in honor on her promotion and I took a few pictures to memorialize the event. This promotion officially designates Nazha as a member of the Old Town Trolley of WDC Leadager Team, but she has been an
unofficial team member for several years.

In addition to Nazha’s abilities in all of OTT-WDC and DC Duck HR functions, she is also one of our Recap experts and supervises our elite crew of receptionists, aka, the Directors of First Impressions. Nazha also spends a considerable amount of time helping to take care of the sometimes complicated needs of our guests.

Please join all of us here at OTT-WDC and DC Ducks to wish much luck to Nazha in her position.

Depot Sales
by Teresa Butts; Depot Sales Manager

With the slow season “in full effect”, the sales team finds themselves wishing for the craziness of summer. This winter is extremely slow, so we are using the time to brush up on our skills and winter clean the depots. Having said that, the sales team is still doing what they do: sell, sell, sell.

Our Sales rep of the Month for September 2012 was Eboni Lynch, October 2012 Jaquita Smith, November 2012 Anthony Sadler, and December 2012 Linda Hazelton. Thank you all for a job well done!

We the People, Constitution Tour
by Thomas St. Clair; Safety Officer

How many of us have looked at the constitution? Here in Washington DC we look at it up close and personal. We teach a tour on the Constitution to a number of schools in Washington DC.

How this happens is through a consortium that helps us do the job for some of the students in the 8th grade here in our city. Our General Manager, David Cohen, charter and group sales representative, Abe Burgos and our operations office, Eric Holmes and Loletta Edwards, do most of the coordination with the drivers and the Sam’s on the trolley. Other people in this consortium are the U.S Capitol Historical Society, which provides guides of the capitol. The White House Historical Association is also a member of this consortium. Even the National Archives and Records Administration works to make this happen for our students in Washington DC.

On any given day, Monday though Friday, from October to the middle of March, either one trolley or up to three trolleys may arrive at a school to pick up from 20 students or up to 80 eighth graders to do We The People Constitution Tours. We have a driver and a cousin Sam who teaches the class on the trolley. The driver is the safety person and the Sam talks about the Constitution and the three articles they should be learning about.

We go to the Capitol and meet a volunteer who gives a tour of the Capitol, as it is the first article of the Constitution. They talk about Article One of the Constitution and why it is so important. They discuss why we have a House of Representatives, and the US Senate. They tell the students about Lady Freedom on the top of the Capitol and how it got there. They also talk about some of the people that have laid in state in the Capitol rotunda. What it means that Congress is sovereign. This is our first stop on our Constitution tour.

Our next stop is the White House and Lafayette Square. This is Article Two of the Constitution. The executive branch enforces our laws that Congress has enacted. We talk about the powers of the president and what he can and cannot do.

At the White House we show the students where the first family lives and where the oval office of the is president and how you can tell if he’s in his office. Do you know that if a marine is standing outside of the oval office the President is inside working?

Our third stop is the Lincoln Memorial. We discuss how Lincoln’s job in the War Between the States was to uphold the Constitution. He also tried to hold the country together during the Civil War. The Lincoln Memorial is a place where many demonstrations have happened over the years. Dr. King marched in Washington and delivered his I Have a Dream speech in 1963. We even talk about Marian Anderson why she was there Easter Sunday in 1939 singing to over 75,000 people that day.

Lunch is at the Agriculture Department and all the students are ready for a break from a morning of hard work. And sometimes I think both the driver and Sam are ready for that break.

After lunch we head for the Supreme Court and Article Three of the Constitution. We speak about this court and how cases end up there. There we address what happens at the Supreme Court and how it affects the 8th grader in Washington and throughout the United States. Most times we have students read about Brown versus Board of Education and that landmark case. This year we are working on another case that is a little less known Mendez versus Westminster and how it affects the case of Brown v. Board of Education.

Our last stop for the day is the National Archives where we can see the history of the Constitution. We speak about the signing of the Constitution and why it is so important. They talk about the National Archives. The guide explains what the Archives does and how important it is to have these documents on public display. They also tell the students about all of the different things that can be done at the archives, for example looking up federal files that are 70 years or older. They have records dating back over 100 years.

Is it a glamorous job? No not really. But it’s the instant reward I love. When I take the general public on a tour, I drop them off at the Lincoln to see it. So I don’t see the reaction of a day tour guest. However, I do get to see the reaction of the students seeing the Lincoln Memorial. For some of them, it’s their first time seeing it.
Not only are we helping the students understand their city more, but we are making history come alive. And that’s why I love the We the People tour. I’m making memories for both the students and myself.

Army Ten Miler
by William "Duke" Ruddick; Tour Conductor

It’s 3am on October 21, 2012 and every driver and tour conductor is slowly making their way into the barn. The mechanics and cleaning crew made sure that every running vehicle was fueled, fit, and ready to roll.

Conductor Michael Hart said “I can’t believe I have to be at work this early. Most barn animals are not awake at 3:00 am.”

Old Town Trolley Tours of Washington DC was contracted to provide transportation for the runners and spectators of the second largest ten mile race in the country, the 28th annual Army Ten Miler. We would take them from the starting area of the race over to the other side of the Pentagon for post race activities at the Hooah Tent Zone.

The race was sponsored by the US Army Military District of Washington, DC and under the command of Major General Michael S Linnington. The route started adjacent to the Pentagon, proceeded north and across the Arlington Memorial Bridge, through the heart of downtown DC (National Mall), and ended in the South Pentagon parking lot.

We were willing and able to carry an estimated 20,000+. We ended up transporting about 12,000 in all.

I asked conductor Andrew Smith how he felt guest relations went. “Very good. The transport of the crowd went smoothly and efficiently. No one had to stand in line long waiting for the shuttle.”

Conductor Mona Lisa Hooks said several of her guests were handicapped veterans and they were very appreciative of having working wheelchair lifts and the overall ease of the transport.

When asked how he felt the company performed that Sunday, General Manager, David Cohen, said he was “relieved, because there was so much chance to have things go wrong.”

Head Conductor Loletta Edwards said, “It seemed to be more of a free for all towards the end of the day with pedestrians walking in every direction. It made it more difficult to navigate the trolleys safely. When it was all said and done, we finished early and incident free.”

A little back story. Army Ten Miler were to have volunteers help out with crowd control. However, it is difficult to keep complete order with 40,000 people in such a concentrated area, especially in a parking lot with no sidewalks. People were everywhere. All of our drivers deserve a pat on the back it was incident free.

Charter and Group Sales Representative Abe Burgos said, “Not knowing what to expect, I thought it was an overall success and a display of true teamwork, with a strong feeling we’ll be back next year.”

Personally, I was proud of the entire Old Town Trolley staff. Successfully participating in such a large event made our company look “Army Strong”. I look forward to being part of the operations in 2013!

The Society of the Cincinnati
by Katherine Neill Ridgley Asst. to the Exe. Director of the Society of the Cincinnati at Anderson House

The Society of the Cincinnati is the nation’s oldest patriotic organization, founded in 1783 by Revolutionary War officers to promote the memory of the achievement of American independence. Now in its third century, the Society has been perpetuated by male descendants of the officers as a nonprofit historical and educational organization that promotes public interest in the American Revolution through its library and museum collections, exhibitions, research, publications, educational outreach, and other activities. The Society also maintains its historic fellowship of members, which currently numbers more than 3,900 men. Many of these activities take place at the Society’s headquarters in Washington, D.C., Anderson House, a National Historic Landmark that was completed in 1905 for Larz

VENDOR SPOTLIGHT

Wyndham National Harbor
by Terrie Thomas; Vendor Representative

Our DC vendor spotlight focuses on Monique Taylor with the Wyndham National Harbor. As a native Washingtonian and living in DC, Monique treats her guests like family. She can tell them the shortest distance to drive to their destination, what to wear to certain restaurants and which stores have the latest fashion in shoes. Monique finds herself getting excited over what she can accomplish when helping her guests. “It’s about making sure they have a great vacation away from home.” The most unique experience she had while helping a guest was assisting in the organization of a wedding. A couple staying at the Wyndham decided they wanted to get married in ONE DAY. Monique dropped everything and in lightning speed, called the appropriate authorities, arranged the reception, cars, flowers, the sunshine and the “I Dos” happened that very same day. Monique said this was an event she will never forget since it was also the day before her very own birthday.
and Isabel Anderson. Upon Larz Anderson’s death in 1937, his wife gave the house to the Society, of which he had been a devoted member. Since 1939, Anderson House has been open to the public as a historic house museum where visitors can see the Andersons’ collections and attend the Society’s exhibitions and other events. Anderson House also houses the Society’s library, a 45,000-item research collection of early printed and manuscript materials and modern reference sources focused on the era of the American Revolution, the art of war in the eighteenth century, and the history of the Society. Anderson House is open for museum tours Tuesday-Saturday, 1-4 p.m., except on federal holidays and during some Society meetings. Admission is free of charge. Location: 2118 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20008. Phone: 202-785-2040. Website: www.societyofthecincinnati.org

Wonder Woman is an Amazon warrior princess and one of the most powerful characters in the DC Universe. The daughter of Hippolyta, she was given power by the Gods to fight against evil in all its forms. Although she was raised entirely by women on the island of Themyscira, she was sent as an ambassador to the world of man, spreading their idealistic message of strength and love. Wonder Woman now resides in Washington, DC, where she fights crime and acts as a positive role model for women everywhere. Her equipment includes the Lasso of Truth, magic gauntlets, and an invisible jet. In the secret identity she has adopted to become closer to humanity, she is Diana Prince, a government agent for the Department of Metahuman Affairs. Wonder Woman is also a founding member of the Justice League.

Wonder Woman was created by William Moulton Marston and Harry G. Peter, and has a lengthy publication history. This history has sometimes included a sidekick Wonder Girl and many villains. Since her debut she has become one of the most popular and recognizable DC Comics characters, along with Batman and Superman. She first appeared in All-Star Comics #8.

I remember being a little lad and loving super heroes. And mostly I loved Lynda Carter. I mean come on! Who didn’t? Super heroes have a way for us normal folk believe that good will always win. It’s a belief I still hold to this day. If you are honest, hard working, truthful to yourself, and believe in your own ability, you will succeed. And if you need help along the way, someone worthy of being called a hero will help you out.
Stephen ‘Mr. Holiday’ O’Brien

Washington DC

**BACKGROUND**

While growing up, I moved with my family and lived in six places around New York, Detroit, and Chicago. I joined the US Navy and am a Vietnam veteran. I stayed in Los Angeles for 13 years after getting out. I met my first wife while working as a telephone operator. I helped raise her two children, and we had two of our own. Later I became employed at LA’s Department of Water and Power as a mainframe computer programmer. I raised four kids on 60’s technology, and I consider myself one of the last COBOL programmers. I have two incredible grandchildren.

I moved to the Washington DC area in 1987 and met my wife Lisa in 1994. Lisa and I both play musical instruments and sing; we performed in public for the first time on our honeymoon. Our band, GrooveQuest, played a big gig in Old Town Alexandria on New Years Eve recently. Past endeavors with the band include a polished Elvis Tribute Show. No one in Trolley World has seen my jump suit, but such a thing indeed exists.

My information technology career ended in 2004. My last three years in a cubical were spent at the US Secret Service headquarters three blocks from the HTA Washington Welcome Center. Next month will be my eighth anniversary with OTT, and I feel very fortunate to have become a Nation’s Storyteller. Though we repeat ourselves as we share the stories, sometimes 80 times a week, I receive energy from the wonderful guests who board my trolley. I look forward to the coming Cherry Blossoms and the Spring; then the Summer (Lord!) The energy of the present will most certainly make a pleasant past and a fruitful future.

**Q | What is your greatest fear?**

**A | That my phone isn’t the fastest available**

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

**A | Philosopher/performer**

**Q | What talent would you most like to have?**

**A | I’d like to play guitar a lot better**

**Q | What’s your favorite vacation spot?**

**A | Almost any beach.**

**Q | What do you consider your greatest achievement?**

**A | Raising my children.**
ST. AUGUSTINE

In the Trolley World
by Michelle LaRocco; Museum Manager

With summer winding down, we began to gear up for our exciting fall offerings. Our Halloween Express tour was a hit, and was a wonderful complement to our award-winning Ghosts and Gravestones Tour. The one-hour Halloween Express event included a stop at Potter’s Haunted House of Wax, where a ghostly portal opened and paranormal activity took over the museum. The lights flickered, the wax figures came to life, and the shrieks from our guests were sure signs of a successful product.

In October, we repeated our now annual tradition of collecting donations for the fight against breast cancer. We are proud to participate in helping the Donna Foundation assist those who struggle with the disease, by placing donation boxes prominently at all of our depots.

We are also proud of our involvement with the Patriot Service Dogs, an area organization that provides service dogs to combat veterans. In addition to placing donation boxes at all of our depots, we invited members of the group, along with their dogs, to spend part of Veterans' Day weekend with us at the main trolley depot, the Old Jail. The dogs were a big hit, and the group was thankful for the chance to spread the word about their services. We are honored to be able to help.

In November we hosted nearly 500 guests at our anniversary party. Held each year at the Old Jail, the party is wildly popular with our industry partners. Partners start asking about the date months in advance! The event has grown so much that we now hire professional bartenders to man the grills. A1A Aleworks mans the beer tent, and San Sebastian Winery mans the wine tent. CASTmember Bill Chambers’ band Night Wing was a big hit, as were the amazing selection of goodies raffled off by Mint Magazine. The Raintree served thousands of miniature dessert items, and Winter Wonderland offered party guests discounts and free passes to their seasonal attraction.

November was also Locals Ride Free month; Hometown Pass holders ride free, without the need to bring a paying guest. They also enjoy tours of the Oldest Store Museum Experience and the Old Jail. This is our way of saying thank you to local residents for their continued support of our operation.

We’ve added quite a few new faces to the Trolley loop. Safety Officer/Trainer Steve Everett was busy all summer and early fall with training classes. His students have been great additions to the Trolley world ... just in time, with the Holly Jolly Nights of Lights Trolley coming up fast!

Holly Jolly Nights of Lights Trolley
by David Chatterton; General Manager

We had a spectacular holiday season this year, with our Holly Jolly Trolleys giving guests and residents the best tour possible of the St. Augustine’s Nights of Lights. Among the rave reviews:

From Mike Clark at The Florida Times-Union:
• “Maybe it’s a sign of a revived economy, but the Holly Jolly Holiday Trolley in St. Augustine has been a huge success. It’s such a success that it’s being extended through Saturday.
• “I rode it with family recently and was surprised to have nearly a two-hour wait. We’re not complaining, we had a great time during the ride.
• “The trolley blasts cheery music. Depending on the driver, you might be yelling Merry Christmas to everyone you pass. My wife said it was like riding on a float...”

Two wonderful comments forwarded to us from www.oldtowntrolley.com:
• “I’ve lived in Jacksonville, FL for 14 years and we visit St. Augustine a few times a year and typically use your trolleys at least once or twice a year. Last night was our first time experiencing the Holly Jolly Trolley for the lovely holiday tour of St. Augustine’s downtown Christmas lights. We arrived early and were thrilled to be on the first trolley of the night. I am writing to say THANK YOU to our trolley conductor, Randy. He was jovial and fun. He guided our trolley in singing Christmas carols. His encouraged the trolley riders to wave and share holiday greetings with the pedestrians and restaurant patrons we passed during our ride. He helped
create a new annual tradition for my family. I only hope all of your conductors are as jovial and kind as Randy. We truly enjoyed ourselves. What a fun time!"

- “What a great way to see a city. Old Town Trolley enabled us to have a fun, safe, and engaging way to see St. Augustine at Christmas time. We even took the evening Holly Jolly Tour. We recommended it to all our friends. Seeing all the lights of Christmas through the “Special Glasses” that turned the lights into snowflakes, was just wonderful while we sang Christmas carols and drove through the streets of old St. Augustine. People walking the streets shopping waved to us and wished us “Merry Christmas”. It was all such a terrific experience. Thanks!”

And we want to extend our own thanks to all our CASTmembers who work so hard to make this tour an annual tradition in St. Augustine. For a lot of families, Christmas wouldn’t be Christmas without the Holly Jolly tour!

In the Museum World
by Suzann Maass; Museum Manager

Since October, the Oldest Jail, Oldest Store Museum and St. Augustine History Museum history tellers have been very busy with school children. Approximately 50 schools with almost 2000 students have visited our museums in the past three months! With all of the students we’ve seen so far, this is a great “warm-up” exercise to get us ready for the really busy school season which kicks off in March.

A couple of prisoner trustees enjoyed a break from their usual jail chores and decorated the parlor in Sheriff Perry’s home for Christmas. His wife Miss Lou oversaw the activity and was very pleased with the results. The tree fills the parlor with the scent of Christmas while the Sheriff’s children anxiously wait for their stockings to be filled. And isn’t that just like Sheriff Joe Perry (or was it Miss Lou) to make sure the mantel stocking hangers look like the lawman’s badge?!

New Year’s Rockin’ Trolley

If you think the holidays are over after December, think again. St. Augustine’s dazzling downtown display – the Nights of Lights—are still sparkling through the end of January. That makes it the perfect time to see the two million lights while taking a musical journey through time aboard The Rockin’ New Year’s Trolley.

Featuring the most popular songs of the decades since the 1920s, guests are entertained by highly energetic and knowledgeable pink lady hostesses and chauffeured by an expert leather-jacketed conductor. Each song is introduced with a bit of music trivia and the Pink Lady teaches the riders the suitable dance moves. Guests are encouraged to sing and dance along – in their seats, of course!

Popular songs and crowd favorites are enjoyed by trolley
guests and people lining the St. Augustine sidewalks alike. It’s hard to tell who’s having more fun sometimes as the “Charleston,” “I’m All Shook Up,” “YMCA,” or “Footloose” echo from the trolley throughout the brick streets of the Nation’s Oldest City.

Our pink ladies are Anna Styron, Bonnie Nicol and Kristin Thomas. The leather-jacketed conductors are Mark “Mack” McFarland and Bill Norris. The tour takes place every Friday and Saturday evening through January.

**The Ghosts of Halloween Past, Present and Future**  
*by Noble Lester; Ghosts and Gravestones Manager*

Halloween in the old town of St. Augustine was an exciting time in 2012, as we partnered with a new haunted venue, Potter’s Wax Museum, for our Halloween Express: Nightmare in the Museum. Last year, it was the nefarious haunted clowns in the Spanish Military Hospital creeping us out, but this year the terror started in the stoic, zombied-out eyes of “living” wax figures as they gazed hungrily upon us mere mortals.

It was a fun-filled, dig-your-nails-into-your-partner’s-arm experience, beginning with a tour through the downtown streets, with our award-winning Ghosts & Gravestones CAST telling tall tales of ghostly apparitions in this ancient city. As the trolley pulled up at Potter’s Wax Museum, our guests were told about the legendary “portal of activity” inside the Museum, which opens only under certain conditions, but especially around Halloween. That is when the souls of the dead inhabit the wax figures, and nightmares became real. (Cue wicked laughter .... )

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**VENDOR SPOTLIGHT**

**Hilton St. Augustine Historic Bayfront**  
*by Melissa Mezick; Vendor Representative*

The Hilton St. Augustine Historic Bayfront is not only an outstanding hotel, but also an outstanding vendor for Old Town Trolleys. We have enjoyed a wonderful working relationship with the Hilton since its inception in September 2004. Bob O’Neill, the General Manager, and Patti McRoberts, the Assistant General Manager, are there to ensure each and every guest is completely satisfied — and believe me, they are! The hotel overlooks St Augustine’s Bayfront and offers an exceptional view, lined with sailboats and catamarans.

Please feel free to contact Bob or Patti the next time you plan on visiting St Augustine, Florida. They will be happy to help you plan the best vacation you ever had!

The buildings of the Hilton St. Augustine Historic Bayfront hotel in Florida were inspired by the Second Spanish Colonial historic period, with wooden balconies, cedar-shake and tile roofs. Unlike other St Augustine hotels, our hotel is comprised of 19 different buildings set around an inner courtyard and connected by an interior corridor; each building is a different color and elevation to blend in with this beautiful and interesting style. The 72 guest rooms at our hotel in St. Augustine, FL are decorated in rich colors and have magnificent views of Matanzas Bay or St. Augustine’s historic district.

Keep up with work using the high-speed internet access in guest rooms or at the business center. With the Menendez and Ponce meetings rooms, our St Augustine hotel has 1, 600 sq. ft. for groups up to 100 people. Host a wedding or conference in the Grand Ballroom, which accommodates up to 100 guests and is elegantly decorated. Plunge into the outdoor swimming pool, or relax in the whirlpool. Keep fit in the fitness center, fully-equipped with cardio machines and weights. Savor Spanish flavors in Aviles Restaurant and Lounge, which offers an eclectic choice of dishes in a fusion of Spanish, French, Asian, and Mediterranean cuisine.
My name is Robert Willix, but you can call me Jasper, Deputy Everett, or Mr. Elf, depending on the hat I am wearing that day. Born in DeLand, Florida, I am the only child of great parents, who raised me to be the best deputy possible.

I came to St. Augustine to attend and graduate from Flagler College. While there, I majored in Communications, while minoring in Business, History, Advertising, and International Studies. And I finished in four years!

I have been with Old Town Trolley for more than a year and a half and love the position I am in. It is amazing, the amount of people you meet while working as a history teller in St. Augustine. I read, run, bike and spend my other free time with my loving girlfriend.

Q | What is your idea of perfect happiness?
A | I live by the motto “No Worries.”

Q | Which three things will you always find in your refrigerator?
A | Concord grape jelly, orange juice, and peppers.

Q | What is the trait you most deplore in others?
A | Being tardy. “If you are early, you’re on time. If you are on time, you’re late.”

Q | If there was one place you could live besides your current city, where would it be?
A | Seattle, WA. I hope to place a new OTT there!

Q | If you could choose one reality TV show to be on, what would it be?
A | The Amazing Race. You get to see the world and maybe even win some money and have fun doing it!
SAVANNAH

City Scoop
by Charlie Brazil; General Manager

The beauty and bustling pace of October, the last gasp of our season, gives way to the crisp, quiet days and nights of November, December and January and the corresponding empty streets. But for Thanksgiving and Christmas, this is a time of ridership in the hundreds instead of thousands, and for planning, off-season strategy, fine tuning and budget preparation. October did not disappoint this year, with beautiful weather, Halloween spirit and ridership of nearly 30,000. November and December dropped, as expected, but were up significantly over the previous years, and kept us hopping, at least on Saturdays and during the holidays.

We are not the only ones that are busy during the “less busy” time. This time of year is “chock full” of events, planning retreats and holiday parties. Big this year was the second year of the Rock and Roll Marathon in the first week of November. I went from audience member in the first year, to participant this year, and I lived to tell about it. Joyce Ellis, Marcie Larkin, Kenny Gresham and all the CAST of OTT-SAV were given the privilege of being the primary transportation logistics partner and we executed brilliantly. It was one of the most often heard comments related to the event this year, “how much smoother everything ran related to the shuttles and transportation.” And as one of those completely pooped individuals who finished, there is nothing more important than having reliable transportation back home (where you can finally collapse without being embarrassed.).

We also were the trolley sponsors for the inaugural “Savannah Harbor Festival of Lights” which is Savannah’s attempt at a holiday lights spectacular to rival those in Charleston, St. Augustine and Atlanta. Over 30,000 people visited the event this year, and the trolleys played a huge part in making their experience a memorable one.

We were fortunate to have the privilege of a visit from one of our HTA Leadagers, in the form of Bobby Bernrueuter, who met Depot Sales Manager Garry Patrick face to face for the first time, and was completely blown away by our “new” offices on Louisville Road. Bob also was extremely impressed at the great job we are doing on the front lines, leading the way in sales, prospecting every potential guest and being great ambassadors of our lovely city.

As of this writing, we are looking forward to our “post” Holiday Party at the Pirate’s House, which will take place tomorrow. We look forward to having good times with our fellow CAST members, awarding our “of the year” recipients and welcoming a visit from our COO- Ed Swift IV. Then we open the doors to our “risk management” contingent in the form of a visit from Bill Maegher, Jim Lamberson and some guests from Liberty Mutual Insurance.

We are also working to bring our Ghosts & Gravestones program completely “in house” after many successful years of partnership with a third party vendor to provide operational support for us. I wanted to be sure to thank David Rousseau, Brad Spinks, Mike Harris, Drew Casper and all the HCMS and STS folks for the good work they’ve done for us over the years. We are ready to take the wheel, and have secured a new Ghosts & Gravestones Manager- Wade Holmes, and retained Mike Harris as the Ghosts & Gravestones supervisor, and are prepared to bring on a number of the actors currently employed by STS. It is an exciting time for the program and we are expecting big things in the year(s) ahead.

As my 15th year with HTA and my ninth year at Old Town Trolley Tours of Savannah draws to a close, I wish all of your lives as blessed as mine, shared with people as good as those that surround and support me, and the good sense to appreciate it all. Hope your 2013 is full of wonderful experiences, spectacular successes and moments to enjoy. Thanks to all for a great 2012!

Holidays and Such
by Marcie Larkin; Operations Manager

We have had a great holiday season here at Old Town Trolley of Savannah. October brought us all the ghouls and goblins when we had our CAST meeting. November was really busy with the 2nd Annual Rock and Roll Marathon. It was a great experience working with all the other tour and motor coach companies. We were given the privilege to organize and provide all of their transportation needs. When the dust settled from all the chaos we got to enjoy the Christmas Festival of Lights and the Holly Jolly Tour. This year was a great success with the help of our little OTT elves. We are taking advantage of this slower season to allow our CAST and trolleys to recuperate and gear up for the busy season ahead.

The Gribble House
by Kenny Gresham; Safety and Training Officer

Our newest Ghosts & Gravestones venue is The Gribble House. David Rousseau is the owner of Savannah Talent Services that manages our evening Ghost Tours. David is also a fine actor and performed the opening weekend of our newest addition, the site of the 1909 triple murder. This ghost story was part of our original Ghosts & Gravestones tour that began in 2000. The story of the Gribble House went away as our tour changed over the years. We were able to incorporate this story back into our tour in October when our old Carbarn was remodeled, making room for additional guest parking and staging. The stage is enclosed by two walls that have pictures of the suspects that allegedly committed the triple murder. One of the walls has a diagram of the house where the three women were killed by what is believed to be an ax as well as a diagram of where in the house the bodies were found. Sounds spooky huh?! This newest addition is a big enhancement to our tour, as it replaces a stop at the Colonial Park Cemetery where we were unable to go into
A warm welcome from the Cast of Old Town Tree
From the entire wintertime
Trolley Tours of Boston!
the cemetery due to city ordinance. This new location also touches on the paranormal; after the Ghost Host talks about the murders, the guests are urged to take pictures to possibly see orbs. Orbs are light circles about the size of a quarter that are the incarnation of the spirits and can be caught on camera when pictures are taken in the dark. Nowadays there are even apps for your cell phone that detect spirits; the most common of these is ghost radar.

I drove the very first ghost tour in Savannah talking about all kinds of ghost stories while trying to sound scary, which is a learned skill! I never envisioned that one day guests would use their cell phone cameras to catch pictures of ghosts and orbs! I would give the tours in 90+ degree heat in broad daylight and pray every minute that we would encounter a spirit or ghost. Now it’s as easy as taking a picture...talk about ESP!

In Loving Memory
by Kenny Gresham; Safety Manager

On January 17, 2012 we lost one of our very own, a Sales Representative and my beloved sister Jeanene Gresham. "J- Dogg" as she was so lovingly called was one of our finest. She began service with our company in 2007 and excelled at her position. She was named Sales Representative of the month many times and was Sales Representative of the Year in 2008. If you look at our Sales Representative manual, you will see a silhouette of Jeanene. When Bobby Bernreuter came to Savannah as he was beginning his job as National Sales Director, "J- Dogg" tried to sell him tickets twice as he walked by. This tenacity highlighted her excellent career with OTT Savannah.

Jeanene bled orange and green. A few days before she passed, I had the extreme pleasure of watching HTA Savannah at its best. Many CASTmembers, enough to run a tour, came to visit her. This outpouring of love was like none I have ever seen before. As one CASTmember left her room, another would enter. She had a trolley full of visitors. Jeanene was much loved and will be missed by our CAST and especially me, her brother. In October, and with thanks to our Leadagers, a trolley was named after her. If you take a look, I present to you, the Jeanene Gresham.

The Silly Season
by Jon Watkins; Director of Human Resources

As our official "season" has wound down we have moved into what I call our "silly season" here in Savannah. Our goals have gone down except for the very busy weeks we had for Thanksgiving and Christmas. As I write this we are officially in the January doldrums for ridership....but February 15th is just around the corner. This is the time of year when I am at my busiest as we are ramping up our hiring for our spring Conductor class and the other positions we will require for season. We are going to try something different this year and hire part time G & G tour drivers and train them. With the challenges we have hiring part time G & G drivers we have decided to try and grow our own for the upcoming season. On that note there is a very large change coming up for our Ghosts and Gravestones program effective February 1st. We previously contracted the actors and managers on duty for the G & G product from Savannah Talent Services, who will no longer be in business effective February one. We are hiring many of the Savannah Talent Services employees as we absorb the actors for the G & G tour and hiring our management team. We plan to hire 9 of the STS Ghost hosts and add at least six additional ghost hosts to give us the flexibility to effectively manage and grow that very important product. Congratulations to Wade Holmes who has been promoted into the new G & G Manager position and Mike Harris who is being hired from STS as the G & G Supervisor.

We have scheduled our annual holiday party for January 11 at the Pirates House. They are one of our partners and do a great job for us when we have our CASTmeetings there. In October our CASTmeeting was held at the Ships of the Seas museum and we had our annual costume contest. 1st prize went to Lillie Shaw and 2nd prize went to Joy Stuckey for their inventive costumes. It was great to see everyone in their Halloween costumes and the CASTmembers had a hard time deciding who had the best ones. The best costume winners got their choice of restaurant gift cards. In November our CASTmeeting was held at the Gribble House which is the new stop on our G & G tour. We had a Ghost Host perform the Gribble House script so our CASTmembers would be familiar with the change to the G & G tour product. The Gribble House replaces the former stop at the Colonial Cemetery. The Gribble House was located on the site of our former car barn. I always wondered why we had unusual things happen in that building when it was our admin office and car barn. At the November CASTmeeting we also enjoyed a visit from Marc Eichberg from Ingham to educate our CASTmembers on the HTA 401(k) plan for the open enrollment period.

The Mechanics of It
by Bruce Smith; Maintenance Manager

We are now in the middle of our slow season. The maintenance department is steadily working, getting the fleet ready for the upcoming hot busy season. We will have seven more trolleys in the fleet this year which is going to be a big help to the operation and the maintenance department, having enough trolleys to help with our growing ridership. We are sad to say we will be retiring HTA # 105 this year; it’s an 84 Chevy that has had a good run.

I and our Lead Mechanic James Gibby had the opportunity to go to Washington DC for propane diagnostics training and were able to...
meet Maintenance Manager Malcolm Barton and his crew. I spoke with Malcolm on the phone many times so it was nice to put a face with the voice. It was a pleasure meeting all of them; he has a good crew. We would also like to thank Washington DC for trading us HTA # 156, 283, and 281 for our two air brake trolleys HTA # 139 and # 140. Three for two, not a bad deal. They were the only air brake units we had in the fleet. It saves us training time not needing air brake endorsements for our new conductor. We hope they are working out for you, DC.

We are looking forward to receiving another trolley from Boston, HTA # 200. When they found out we wanted to add it to our ghost fleet they will have it painted black for us before it is shipped down. We really appreciate that all we will need to do is decal and decorate it, then out it goes prowling around Savannah. Thank you Boston.

Special thanks go out to National Fleet Manager Joe Moyer for his wheeling and dealing, helping us find some of those hard to find parts and shuffling trolleys all over the country to assure that we all get the trolleys we need to keep our operations flowing in a positive direction. Joe will also be joining us along with Jasper Engines here in Savannah with the propane conversions of our five new Molly Trolleys; we should have them ready by the beginning of our season. We are also in the process of converting the specialty trolleys to propane. They were all three fuel injected 454’s. With the removal of most of the electrical system they will be much easier to work on.

We hope to have at least 80% of our fleet converted to propane by the end of this year. Have a great season from all of us in Savannah.

...and A Few Words from Depot Sales

by Garry Patrick; Depot Sales Manager

Fall has been an excellent season for our Sales Department. The people just seemed to keep on coming. Having new trolleys in the fleet certainly helped our performance and as much as the conductors love the trolleys, the sales reps are all pretty excited as well! It certainly helps us keep on selling when we have bright, shiny new trolleys rolling through the city.

In an effort to increase our G&G sales we have staged our retired Ghost Trolley 152 to our Sales Depot on MLK Jr. Boulevard as a permanent “Billboard”. People love getting their picture with the ‘Ole Girl” and as a result, we have been seeing more G&G sales generated from this depot.

Well done to Tim Conway, Phil Starks and Aundre Lark on winning Sales Rep of the month for September, October and November. We have so many sales champions in Savannah, it makes picking a worthy winner on any given month one of the most challenging decisions we make as Leadagers!

Congratulations to the team on delivering great results!

Musings by the Colonel

by Robert “The Colonel” Hunter; Vendor Sales Manager

Hello folks, welcome back to Savannah! Since our last edition we have continued to foster wonderful relationships with our vendor partners. The Avia hotel has changed flags and is now ANdAZ by Hyatt. Recently having undergone a multi-million dollar renovation, ANdAZ offers a whole new hotel experience. With its artful décor, relaxed urban vibe and new South sophistication, ANdAZ offers a bold new sleek style and a sophisticated attitude to historic Savannah. We are excited to announce we will soon be adding one of our concierges to this trendy hotel!

Even through our slow season we are keeping pace with our goals, and working diligently to increase the number of vendors we work with. In November as part of our Cookie Program, while making my rounds to current and potential vendor partners, I was dressed as an early American Nobleman and distributed mugs and literature from The Boston Tea Party exhibit. It was a great way to spread the news about an exciting feature in Boston while drumming up more business for us here in Savannah.

It’s a great time to be in Savannah...y’all come and visit!

On the Run with Groups and Charters

by Joyce Ellis; Groups & Charters Manager

Savannah’s groups and charters department is rolling along, heading for another great year. This past October we once again provided transportation for The Historic Savannah Foundation’s annual Gala. By the way, we are the preferred provider for the Historic Savannah Foundation! October also saw the influx of our international visitors from Australia to Great Britain and all points in between. We toured guests through Globus/Cosmos, Contiki Holidays, Titan Tours, several Military Reunions, and of course our Girl Scouts were in town for Juliette Gordon Low’s Birthday the end of October!

We rolled into November with our 2nd Annual Rock n Roll Marathon on Nov 1st–3rd! This year Savannah hosted approx 19,000 runners. Savannah has a contract until 2016, and we’re sure they will renew the contract with the Old Town Trolley. We were selected as the preferred transportation company and not only did we provide transportation for the VIP’s, but also the Expo Events and race day transportation. I was tasked with getting our partners together and providing motor coaches, mini buses as well as our trolleys to provided 26 vehicles for shuttles the day of race. I was also responsible for the 15 loaders/greeters the day of race; the Expo trolleys and loaders; and personally staffing the booth both days of Expo leading up to race day! Needless to say, I ran my own marathon those three days! Talk about a group effort in coordinating; I couldn’t have done it all without the help of Marcie Larkin, Ops Manager; and Bean Kelly, our awesome Head Dispatcher; and of course the awesome CASTmembers of OTT-SAV. Thanks to all y’all!!!!!
What a way to start the Month of November! The Rock’n’Roll Marathon was quickly followed by a favorite German cruise ship; the MS Columbus II. The original MS Columbus visited us last year and was retired. Thanks to Gaby at New World Travel for booking the ship with us; we entertained their guests on a trolley tour around Savannah in the short time they were in port. We also kicked off our 15th Annual Holly Jolly Holiday Trolley Tour starting on November 23rd. Group numbers were down slightly on this year Holly Jolly Trolleys, but not to worry, we still made goal! Charlie has more details about the Holly Jolly Trolley Tours and our partnership with the Savannah Harbors Festival of Lights, new this year to Savannah.

December started off running, literally, with the Savannah Bridge Run! Once again the Groups and Charters Department provided the transportation for all the participants (5000+ runners). I’m proud to say that my daughter and I did the 5k. Ok, so we walked and took pictures at the top of the bridge more than we actually ran, BUT we did finish! Two years in a row that I’ve competed and I hope to make year three the year I actually run!

Also in December the Groups and Charters Department was busy with the annual Christmas parades. We provided trolleys for Savannah’s Parade of Lights, the Tybee Island Parade, Pembroke Parade, West Chatham Parade, and also the Bluffton, SC Parade. We also booked our decorated trolleys for groups that wanted to ride around doing their own Christmas Caroling and looking at Christmas lights & light displays around Savannah.

January started off slow, but momentum is building! I was honored at a luncheon provided by the Girl Scouts of the Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace and given their “World of Thanks”. I felt very humbled accepting this because I was honored doing something that comes naturally to me, helping others and especially the Girl Scouts. Also honored that day were Mary and Stratton Leopold. For those that don’t recognize Stratton Leopold, he’s a Hollywood movie producer that also owns Leopold’s Ice Cream shop in downtown Savannah. Stratton and Mary are also strong supporters of the Girl Scout community. You have to come to Savannah just to try his ice cream, and you never know which Hollywood star you might run into!

January will also have us busy in the Groups and Charters department as we provide trolleys for our 34th Annual MLK Jr. Parade on January 21st. Savannah hosts one of the largest MLK Parades in the Southeast, with this year’s parade having approx 350 entries.

With only two months left in our fiscal year, the Groups and Charters Department is looking forward to another great year with more great things to come! See you soon!

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Haunted Happenings
by Wade Holmes; Ghosts & Gravestones Manager

Hello everyone! My name is Wade Holmes and I am the new manager for the Ghosts & Gravestones Tour. We are all very excited about new possibilities as it will be back in-house from third party management as of February 1st. With the help of my Ghosts and Gravestones Supervisor, Michael Harris, I have much planned for the upcoming management change and busy season.

First, we would like to congratulate and welcome our existing Ghosts and Gravestones actors making the transition from Savannah Talent Services to Historic Tours of America! I look forward to working with you and forging a team for the seasons ahead. We will also be welcoming several new CAST members in the coming weeks and plan to be busy training them to be first class ghost hosts and chandlers.

Another first for Ghosts and Gravestones here in Savannah will be an evening CAST meeting. This will give us a great opportunity to start each evening on a positive note, keep everyone up to date on changes, highlight performances, and bring our team together before heading out to haunt the streets of Savannah.

We also have some new ideas on improving the overall guest experience that we are focusing on this season and plan to implement over the course of the year. So, as you can tell, G&G of Savannah will be an exciting and busy operation this year with many new faces and changes on the horizon. I, for one, am confident in the new potential of an already fantastic product and am looking forward to seeing us grow and improve in the coming months.

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**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**

**SEPTEMBER**
- Robert Hunter, 11 years
- William Johnston, 2 years

**OCTOBER**
- Vivian Colon, 4 years
- Asia Jones, 1 year

**NOVEMBER**
- Jacqueline Kelly, 7 years
- Michael Smith, 7 years
- Juanita Erskine, 2 years
- Rance Shell, 2 years

**DECEMBER**
- Venice Sharon, 10 years
- Linda Ferguson, 3 years
- Garry Patrick, 2 years
- Stephen Warren, 2 years
- Cynthia Barris-Speke, 2 years

**JANUARY**
- Shari Butler, 10 years
- William Haegelin, 6 years
- Tommy Altizer, 6 years
- Larry Strong, 3 years
- Wayne Johnson, 3 years
- Mark Zichlin, 2 years
- Danielle Legette, 2 years
- Donald Hendrix, 2 years
- James Beam, 2 years
- Stewart Noll 2 years
- Sharon Gray, 2 years
- Timothy Conway, 1 year
- Gregory Beach, 1 year
- Lynette Williams, 1 year
- Cheri Barclay, 1 year
- Paul Chaumiv III, 1 year
- Daniel Foust, 1 year

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**WELCOME ABOARD**

Regis Williams
Michael Scuito
Keith Cyr
Sharon Gray
Michael Lenze
Jasmine Johnson
Hello everybody, welcome to OTT Savannah! I am honored to be chosen as the CASTmember spotlighted in this edition. My name is Craig Armstrong and I am the Sales Coordinator for the Groups and Charters Department as well as the Administrative Assistant for the Vendor Department. I began working for OTT Savannah in May of last year, though my life in hospitality began 24 years ago. How the time does fly by! It all began in a small city called Pinehurst, NC, when I got a job working for The Pinehurst Resort. From that point on I knew I wanted to work in tourism and customer service for the rest of my life. Since those early days I have worked primarily in hotels, resorts and hotel corporate offices in various positions from PBX to Event Management. For the last 15 years I worked for Marriott, Intl. in the Boston area at two hotels and their Area Sales Office. In October of 2011 I moved my family to Savannah to get back to my Southern roots and to enjoy a warmer climate year round. I took a few months off to visit family and friends then found employment with OTT Savannah. It's been an interesting journey since then and I look forward to many great years ahead. If you are visiting Savannah make sure to stop by the office and say hey!

Q | What is your idea of perfect happiness?
A | Toiling in my yard and garden every morning, taking the dogs swimming in the lake every afternoon and having dinner with various friends and family each night.

Q | If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?
A | I would hope to come back as a magnolia tree.

Q | Which talent would you most like to have?
A | To be a classically trained singer.

Q | What is your most treasured possession?
A | Family photographs.

Q | What do you most value in your friends?
A | Honesty, respect and a caring heart.
**SAN DIEGO**

**St. Vincent DePaul Village Children’s Holiday Party**

*by John Savage; Old Town Market Leasing Manager*

Thirty children ages 5-11, living in a downtown shelter, joined us at the Old Town Market for our 9th annual St. Vincent DePaul Holiday party. The children enjoyed pizza, sodas, piñatas and holiday fun. The highlight of the visit was a gift to each child by Santa and Mrs. Claus. The children had filled out wish list cards earlier in the month so that Santa knew exactly what they wanted. Santa and Mrs. Claus were played by our very own Norm Niles and Carmen Thulin. On the way home, the Trolley and its conductor Hatch took the children on an evening tour of holiday lights around the city.

For the children five years and under, Mr. and Mrs. Claus bring their gift to St. Vincent DePaul and personally deliver them!

A huge thank you to Trolley CASTmembers, Old Town Market Merchants, and Kobey’s Swap Meet staff as they all partnered together to make sure every child received a gift.

Over 140 children, with one or both parents, live at the downtown San Diego shelter. All 140 plus children at the shelter were given a personalized gift. The children’s ages ranged from infants to 17 years of age at the shelter.

Jennifer Ryan, Children’s Services Program Manager, St. Vincent DePaul Village writes:

“Hi John, The kids had a FABULOUS time tonight. While on the Trolley one of the children said to me, ‘This is the best night ever!’ I can’t thank you enough for everything that you and your team do for our kids each year. Please make sure they all know how much the kids appreciate them.”

- Jennifer Ryan

**Fiesta de Kustom Kulture Car Show**

Car and Low-Brow Art Show by Fiesta de Kustom Kulture closed the streets of Old Town on Saturday, Sept. 8th. Hot rods, street rods, customs, and muscle cars of the pre-1972 era were on display for the public. All cars were entered to win trophies as the general public cast votes for their favorite ride.

The numerous attendees enjoyed the live entertainment as they soaked up the works of world-famous custom painters and pin strippers on Artist Alley. A charity auction raised money to benefit San Diego’s “Just in Time” program. “Just in Time” is an organization that provides foster youth with resources transitioning them into independent living. Various car culture artists along with Old Town businesses made generous donations for the charity action. Over $1000 dollars was raised for this worthy cause.

**Dias de los Muertos, “The Days of the Dead”**

Every autumn, Monarch Butterflies return to Mexico for the winter protection on the oyamel fir trees. The local inhabitants welcome back the returning butterflies, which they believe bear the spirits of their departed. The Spirits are to be honored during Los Dias de los Muertos.

Dias de los Muertos, “The Days of the Dead” is a traditional Mexican holiday honoring the dead. It is celebrated every year on November 1st and 2nd. Not to be confused with the American Halloween, Dias de los Muertos is not a sad or scary time, but instead a time of remembering and rejoicing good memories of family and friends that have passed away. Family and friends will make small altars at home, work, or grave sites. They decorate the shrines with pictures, flowers, food & drink, statues of saints and other religious artifacts.

This year was the 3rd annual Old Town Dias de los Muertos, businesses produced a walking map to over 30 shrines. Local restaurants offered specials and give-a-ways. The Old Town Market hosted live music, face painting and flowers for the guests to place at their favorite altar. The highlight of the night is a candle light walk from the center of the Historic State Park to Campo Santo (San Diego’s oldest existing European cemetery). The cemetery had a public altar and docents explaining the stories of some of the more famous grave sites. The turnout was fantastic! Over 10,000 people came out for Friday night alone!

**Old Town San Diego Las Posadas**

Las Posadas was held Sunday December 16th, this centuries-old procession has been celebrated down San Diego Avenue for 62 consecutive years. The procession reenacts the biblical journey of Mary and Joseph through the town of Bethlehem. Family activities...
were held throughout the day and the candle light procession started shortly after sunset. A piñata party and bonfire followed the procession in the center of the State Park. This year the featured entertainers were the Martin Luther King Community Choir, along with other strolling carolers.

October Breast Cancer Awareness fundraising Event
by Carmen Thulin; Human Resource and Finance Manager

Old Town Trolley Tours of San Diego once again partnered with UCSD Moores Cancer Center to raise awareness and money in our efforts to fight breast cancer.

We started right away by having a bake sale and continued having them each week of October. Several of our CAST brought in the baked goods to contribute for our weekly sale. The bake sales brought in a total of $393.50.

Nancy Nuhaily, office support, called many of our business partners that donated items for our auctions. By the first week of October, we had already surpassed last year’s total funds with $1,700! A big thank you for all those that donated: Winzer Products (large bucket with car washing items); Ferrellgas (2 burner camper stove, hoses and full propane tank); Unifirst uniforms (2 Charger tickets); Nancy was able to score an autographed baseball, picture & BBQ sauces from Randy Jones a former pitcher with the Padres.

At our Seaport Village Trolley and SEAL booth, bottles of water were available to the public for a $1.00 donation which was a big hit for a total of $446.26.

Our wonderful and generous Conductors donated daily tips for a total of $905.60. One conductor, Jim Fraley, went beyond expectations with $360.04 contribution tip money for the month. Thank you Jim! We also had three guessing jar contests that contributed $124.00 and some additional money (candy machine money and lost and found Money) for $113.40. Drum roll, please! ...for a total of $4,094.25!!!

We were very thankful and appreciative of all our great CASTmembers and the community for supporting our efforts together towards the UCSD Moores Cancer Center during October’s Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign. We were very elated when Piper sent us another $1000.00 for our efforts too.

Two College Football Bowl Games Bring Excitement and National Attention to San Diego

The eighth annual San Diego Credit Union Poinsettia Bowl game welcomed the BYU Cougars vs. the hometown San Diego State Aztecs, Wednesday, December 21st at Qualcomm Stadium.

The Festivities for the 2012 San Diego Poinsettia Bowl kicked off in downtown San Diego’s historic Gaslamp Quarter at the Poinsettia Bowl march through the Gaslamp - sponsored by Westfield Horton Plaza. Marching bands and spirit squads from the participating universities paraded from each end of 5th Avenue performing holiday classics, and meeting up at Market Street for a heart-pounding Battle of the Bands! BYU went on to win, 23-6.

The following week, Wednesday Dec 27th, the 2012 Bridgepoint Education 35th annual Holiday Bowl College football game featured the UCLA Bruins vs. the Baylor Bears at Qualcomm Stadium. The week-long event features team days at SeaWorld, San Diego Zoo, Navy and Marine Corps luncheon and the Port of San Diego Big Bay Balloon Parade. Baylor went on to upset the favorite UCLA Bruins, 49-26.

Old Town Trolley’s participation included trolley transportation for the famous “Balloon Platoon” for the 22nd Annual Port of San Diego Big Bay Balloon Parade. Recognized as “America’s Largest Balloon Parade,” the event features more giant helium-filled character balloons than any parade in the country.

Old Town Art Festival

The Old Town San Diego Art Festival was held on Oct. 6th & 7th and featured over 150 contemporary artists and well known national, international and some of southern California’s premier and emerging artists. Fine art paintings, high end jewelry, glass, sculpture and photography filled the streets of Old Town and the Historic State Park.

This event brought together the essence of Southern California; beautiful San Diego weather, the flavors of Old Town’s international foods, a wine tasting pavilion and continuous live entertainment. The festival ran along San Diego Avenue from Conde Street to Twiggs Street.

Local San Diegans and tourists that attended the Festival enjoyed a wonderful two days of history, art and culture in beautiful and historic Old Town San Diego.
More Convention Meetings Help Charter and Group Sales
by Erica Frost; Charters and Group Sales Manager

It has so far been a banner fiscal year for Charter and Group Sales and the fall season has been without exception. Groups and Conventions are back to booking their meetings and it is a trend that we had been looking for with much anticipation. I really think we have “turned the corner” and the sentiments seem to be the same throughout all capacities within the meeting planning industry. Trolley charter and SEAL groups were steadily coming and booking with us and we carried a lot of happy groups! Factually speaking, we were 17% above last year for Trolley sales and SEAL sales doubled what they were last year during the same timeframe; we’re loving it!

Weddings Keeping ‘Felicity’ Busy This Fall and Winter Season

This autumn couples were “falling” in love and getting married. There were tons of weddings and overall a noticeable increase compared to last year. In particular, the Felicity wedding trolley has been out every weekend from September-mid-November. She’s on a roll!

Veterans Day Parade

On Monday, November 12th, Downtown San Diego hosted the 26th annual Veteran’s Day holiday parade Honoring San Diego men and women of all ages who have served in any capacity in the U.S. Armed Forces. The 2012 parade honored the 65th anniversary of the first recorded flight to break the sound barrier with Major General Charles (Chuck) Elwood Yeager, pilot of that heroic flight, serving as the 2012 Grand Marshal. Parade participants included more than 50 local Veteran organizations, 12 band and pageantry units, 15 elected officials and 55 community organizations as thousands of local San Diegans looked on with cheers and applause.

This year, was record-breaking for Old Town Trolley as we had a total of nine trolleys in the parade carrying multiple different Veterans organizations such as Honor Flight San Diego, American Ex-POWs, Eagle’s Wings, Mt. Soledad Memorial Association and the 187th AHC (Assault Helicopter Company) Vietnam Helicopter Pilots. The parade was tremendous as was our involvement. The trolleys were all decked out in their finest red, white and blue adornments and proudly carrying these amazing men and women to whom we are so grateful. A definite highlight for Terri Zorn, Operations Manager, was getting to kiss Chuck Yeager, the Grand Marshal of the parade. (see photo) Terri was over the moon, no pun intended; I mean, come on, he ONLY broke the sound barrier.

Expedia Partner Conference and Las Vegas Sales Mission
by Rod LaBranche; Director of Travel Industry Sales

Rod LaBranche attended the annual Expedia Partner Conference in December in Las Vegas and was also able to see a few other accounts such as Viator and GetYourGuide. The conference brings over 3000 suppliers from around the world who work with Expedia. The keynote speaker this year was billionaire Barry Diller, Chairman and Executive of Expedia, Inc. During the trip Rod also did sales presentations to the reservation staff at Viator.

The Old Town Trolley, festively decorated, participated in the Veterans Day parade.

Terri kissing Chuck Yeager.

Veteran's Day Parade

Mechanic Oscar Alfaro works long and hard to keep the San Diego SEAL tours running. This year was our best season yet with the help of all our great mechanics and CAST.

Christian Perez enjoys Phil’s BBQ at our holiday party.

Jay Judal (San Diego Zoo), Andy Thomas (Evans Hotels), Chris Boone (San Diego Speedboat Adventures), Kate Ulrich (USS Midway Museum), Ilsa Butler (Evans Hotels), Rod LaBranche, and Melissa DiMartino (San Diego Zoo) at the Expedia Partners Conference.

old town trolley tours of san diego
Eleanor Mahl, Nancy Nuhaily, Jim Fraley and Victor Leca along with their wives, enjoy a fun night out at Café Coyote in Old Town.

Halloween. Drivers Ken Hill, Vidal Sisneros and Don Kaye with Sales Rep David Mahl.

General Manager David Thornton along with members of the community, helps decorate the Old Town Chamber Christmas tree.

Conductor Mike Devin and his son enjoyed the trolley night out at the Padre’s game.

Conductor Steve Brooks and Sales Rep Linda Florentino along with their spouses, enjoy a great night out at our annual holiday party.

Philipp Fondaw, Conductor
David Mahl, Sales Representative
Evan Kohler, Supporting

Captain Bob Williams, Conductor
Barbie Harrell, Sales Representative

Susie Vetter, Conductor
Karen DeHaan, Sales Representative

Tomi Niezgoda, Conductor
Linda Florentino, Sales Representative
Elliott Gonzalez, Supporting

Philip Fondaw, Conductor
Kelly McBrearty, Sales Representative
Albert Guzman and Evan Kohler, Supporting
Ken Hill, Rookie of the Year
Captain George Adams and 1st Mate Brenda Martin, SEAL

Local artisan and Trolley friend, Mike LeBold paints a new SEAL logo on the side of our office building.

Where is everyone on this Thanksgiving day?* on our first open Thanksgiving day Trolley run. Business picked up later in the day with over 100 guests.

Office Erin Smith, Nancy Nuhaily and Carrie Nunez enjoying a fun holiday party.

Detailer Fernando Avila and HR assistant Erin Smith enjoying good laughs at our holiday party.

*2012 OF THE YEAR
In The Kitchen With
Terri Zorn

Diabetic Pumpkin Cream Cheese Squares

“I wanted my husband to be able to enjoy a holiday dessert, but with his diabetes, it is hard to find something that won’t spike his sugar. This recipe was found on a diabetic website; he loves them and so do I! You do not have to be diabetic to enjoy this dessert.”

Batter
- 1 cup sugar-free canned solid-pack pumpkin (I use the regular)
- 1 cup Splenda Granular
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup self-rising flour
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

Filling
- 4 ounces fat free cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup Splenda Granular
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Grease a 9 x 13 pan
3. For the filling – whisk together cream cheese, Splenda and egg until well blended; set aside
4. For the batter – combine the pumpkin, Splenda, egg, and oil; mix well. Stir in flour, cinnamon, baking powder, nutmeg, and ginger. Pour into prepared pan.
5. Drizzle cream cheese mixture over the batter. Cut through the batter with knife several times for a marbled effect.
6. Bake 25 – 30 minutes or until a tester inserted into the center comes out clean. Cool; cut into squares

Serving Size: 1 (36g)
Servings per recipe: 18
Calories: 80
Total fat: 4.7 g
Cholesterol: 24 mg
Carbs: 6.8 g
Dietary Fiber: 0.6 g
Sugars: 0.5 g
Protein: 2.4 g
BACKGROUND

I guess the best word to describe me might be “traveler”. Born in Boston, I have lived in many cities, including Syracuse, New Haven, Toronto, London, and Minneapolis, as well as Long Beach, Venice, and Pasadena, and I have spent a lot of time in all of the “lower 48” states and several countries in Europe. My father worked for the railroad (and so did I off and on in my early 20’s), so I rode the rails for free during much of my early life, even living my last two high school years virtually in two places at the same time!

In the 1970s, my preferred method of travel was hitch-hiking, and those “hippie backpacking days” took me up and down the East Coast and throughout the U.K., France, and Belgium. Most of my early working life was (mis)spent playing bass and fronting rock and roll bands, performing throughout the Northeast and, eventually, California. Later, in the 1990’s, I moved into the production side of the music biz, touring as a stage manager for the 1960’s artists, primarily The Monkees, Herman’s Hermits, and Bobby Sherman. My nickname “Bones” is the result of an encounter with a Monkees fan that came upon Davy Jones and me in a restaurant and decided I was probably a famous person, too. He settled on the actor who played Dr. McCoy in the original STAR TREK series, so everyone on the tour started calling me “Bones” and it stuck. Around the same time, alternating with the concert work, I found myself aligned with a trade show company, supervising the set-up of car show displays throughout the country and eventually conducting training seminars and test-drive demonstrations for new vehicle launches across the USA for General Motors... more travel.

Needless to say, when I finally landed in San Diego in 2010, the obvious place for me to work was OLD TOWN TROLLEY, where I could continue my life of driving and talking/performing. This time, however, there is one difference. After all my years on the road and many now-forgotten homes, I have found my heart in San Diego and I believe I am finally “settled”. Of course, I still play in a band and do the occasional automotive training gig, but I’m not moving quite as far anymore (nor as fast). I love working with the motley crew of OTT, all of whom seem to have back-stories like my own. Someday, I will write a television script a la “Cheers” or “Taxi”, based on OLD TOWN TROLLEY and I’ll have the last laugh, at last!

Q | What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
A | Procrastination!

Q | What or who is the greatest love of your life?
A | This is an easy one… my incredible wife, Debbie, without question.

Q | What is your most treasured possession?
A | This rolling stone has gathered very little moss, except for, perhaps, my 1962 fender P-Bass, which I still play after 40+ years. Of course, if it disappeared tomorrow…. oh, well… you can’t take it with you in the end.

Q | If there was one place you would like to live besides your current city, where would it be?
A | Paris… No wait, London!... or Adelaide, Australia… or.. oh crap….

Q | Who are your favorite writers?
A | Kurt Vonnegut, Tom Wolfe, Jack Kerouac.
KEY WEST

Happy New Year!

by Steven Burress; Old Town Trolley Operations Manager

Each year I start the year off with amazement. Where did the prior year go? How is it that we are throwing away another calendar and starting a whole new year? Sometimes it can feel overwhelming to look at the next 12 months and determine what you plan to do and when it needs to be accomplished. The dreaded New Year’s resolutions! I have a bit of a different look on planning your year when it comes to what you want to accomplish. I like to encourage people to look at each day. Don’t worry about what you may have looming ahead in December. It’s only January. It’s a time of renewal! You can ask the Castmembers in Key West, I am perhaps the craziest person they talk to each day. I think each of them know that I try to be upbeat, positive and focus on how I can be an example and positive influence on each person I come into contact with that day. There are days when you may see me dancing at the copier, just for the fun of it. The CASTmembers have come to realize that they may find me in any sort of crazy situation. Hurricane preparations may find me in a garbage bag, a busy day in Mallory Square may require that I put a sponge on my head. I believe coming to work should be fun. We have a very important job where stress can be high. We have a responsibility to provide a safe, quality tour to guests who have placed their trust in our company. Making sure that each day starts with a smile really helps to alleviate some of that stress. I encourage each of you to not be overwhelmed by the rules and limitations you have put on yourself as of January 1, 2013. Look at each day, begin with a smile and work to accomplish your goals one day at a time.

Season is Here!

by Candy Jones; Old Town Trolley Head Conductor

It is only January and I can already see that 2013 is going to be a fantastic year for Old Town Trolley Key West. Looking at the cruise ship schedule for January – March, we have a total of 113 cruise ships due to visit Key West. For the first time in a very long time we have a total of four ships coming in on March 4th!!! That could easily be 5,000 – 10,000 tourist descending upon our small island all in one day! Old Town Trolley Key West will be ready to show them all our little slice of paradise.

We are experiencing an unusually warm winter. These past two weeks our high temp has been 77 – 81 degrees, with the low around 72. Don’t get me wrong, that is great weather and I’m sure that all of our visitors are enjoying it, especially those from the cold north. But we would love to have some cool to cold weather and be able to dust off our sweaters and jackets and give our shorts a rest from the laundry! I’m sure Boston and DC are really sympathizing with us right now........For those of you that are up north, keep warm and if it gets too cold come down and visit us in Key West.

Wishing everyone a very Happy & Prosperous New Year!

Season is Here!

by Andy Kirby; Key West Sales Manager

We are in the thick of the season, so bring it on! I believe Key West has the great privilege of showcasing HTA to the world. Every day is like having company coming to your home for a visit, we all prepare ourselves for our guests. Just like cleaning home we have to clean our minds and continue to prepare. Paul “Bear” Bryant once said, “It’s not the will to win, but the will to prepare to win that makes the difference.” I like to use this opportunity to remind us all that we can boost our HTA business by engaging in a simple process: creating plans to do more business with every guest we come across. It is our entire job to think ahead and be prepared to suggest additional ways we can serve our guests. Servicing existing guests is at least ten times easier than finding new guests. When selling anything to anybody you need to “find a need and fill it”. When selling products and services we must sell the one that fulfills our guest’s needs. This is not about pushing products, it is all about being conscious of the undeniable fact that the guest doesn’t know what the guest doesn’t know. Salesmanship starts when the customer says no. The only objections you cannot overcome are those that are unspoken. Objections are buying signals. They prove your prospect is interested but has concerns or needs more information before making a commitment to move ahead. Instead of dreading a prospect’s objections, look forward to them. Selling doesn’t begin until you hear your prospect’s concerns. We all have to have skin in the game, to win. We, as a company, continue to be a leader in the attraction business, and “We are the Nation’s Story Teller”. Tell everyone one you come in contact with that one line. Continue to believe in yourself and we will all enjoy the success together. As always I thank each and every one of our CastMembers and their families for their support, commitment and dedication. Make failure your teacher, not your undertaker. ---- Enjoy Your Next Sunset!!!!

From the World of Wedding Charters: Is Transportation a Guy Thing?

by Tammy Oosterhoudt; Group Sales

When it comes to wedding planning, it’s usually a girl thing. It’s a strange world of details – color schemes and fabric swatches; wedding gowns (white, candlelight or blush?) and guest lists; bridesmaids and groomsmen; flowers and fondant; place cards, menus and music – all usually the realm of the bride and the MOB. Together, they pour over bridal magazines. They fret; they worry. Every miniscule detail is analyzed, discussed and worried over, and usually normal women become obsessed.

Left by the wayside? The groom and the father of the bride. If they are given, or more accurately stated, trusted, with one task, it’s, you guessed it: TRANSPORTATION. Just because boys are supposed to like cars, engines and like to drive fast doesn’t necessarily make them good at figuring out how to get to the church (or in Key West,
Chris Belland adds his congratulations to the ship’s crew knowing we are the “go to” people for anything they might need, whether it is information, or a quick ride across town to pick up something for a party on board.

December and January mark the beginning of the high cruise ship season in Key West. We are a popular stop on many Caribbean voyages. Frequently, we are the first port before the ships make their way to exotic locales in the Bahamas, the Cayman Islands, or Cozumel or the last port before they head to their point of disembarkation. In January we typically have 9 – 10 ships call to Key West per week. Come the height of season in March, that number could be as high as twelve! It is imperative that we treat each ship that comes in as if they are the most important group of guests that we have. They are here on vacation, so we make sure that their stay is as hassle-free and stress-free as possible, much like Key West living can be! It is an honor to be able to share the culture and history of our home with people from literally every corner of the globe.

Just Another Day in the Office
by Mary Martinez; Old Town Trolley and Conch Tour Train Office Manager

Making sure someone has a great vacation is not only limited to giving a great tour on board a train or a trolley. There is also an entire back of the house operation which is vitally important. Our high season is upon us, so we have made great strides to ensure that we have hired a sufficient number of trolley conductors, train engineers, Mechanics, and Office Staff for a smooth winter and spring of 2013. It is not enough, however, to have the right amount of people; we also need to be certain that we have the right type of people in the right job. After a new CASTmember is hired, they then go through an extensive orientation and training process so they can quickly fit in with those of us who may have been around for years.

In addition to ramping up our hiring for the season, we are busy with many other projects. Our Conductors and Engineers need to be prepared for winter, so we are now stocked with jackets, sweatshirts and hats. We pretended to be Santa’s elves while we spent a few afternoons preparing gift boxes with sweets and other treats as holiday gifts for everyone. And lastly, since Thanksgiving and
Christmas are definitely work days for us, we had an immense array of food brought in so everyone could celebrate the holiday while in between tours or on a break. Now that we have rung in the New Year, we can truly say that we are ready for our season! All Aboard!

**Safety First, Courtesy a Close Second**
*by Claire Hiller; Safety Officer - Key West Operations*

As the season opens here in the Florida Keys, we have been busy working with a great group of new drivers (10 total) for the Conch Tour Train, Old Town Trolley and Southernmost Duck Tours. This year as in the previous years we even had a few Old Town Trolley snow birds from DC, a Key West welcome to Dave Willingham and Gary Barr, who summer in DC and winter in the Florida Keys.

Are Southernmost Duck tours are up and running; three ducks (Hydra Terra Amphibious Vehicles) have flown in to Key West for a long stay. We welcome Captain Courageous Duck, Alfalfa-A-Duck, and most recently down from the snowy north I Emma Duck. Both Captain Courageous and Alfalfa-A-Duck came through the Certificate of Inspection given by the US Coast Guard with “flying” colors and are setting sale in the local warm waters off Key West.

On the next page is the list from Key West Operations for Safe Driving Awards, which includes Old Town Trolley and our new operation Southernmost Duck Tours (opened November, 2012) The Conch Tour Train safe driving awards is on page 39.

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**On the Spot...**

**Jake Freeman**
Mechanic, Old Town Trolley Tours

I was born in Scottsboro, Alabama and moved to Savannah, Georgia as a teenager. I attended HS at St. Andrews where I also played football. I can gladly say that I am a proud owner of a state championship ring.

After graduating high school in 2001, I enlisted in the United States Navy. Upon completing my four years in the military, I was given the opportunity to work in the solar industry with my father’s company, One World Sustainable. After a number of years installing solar in places ranging from Montana to St. Thomas, my company landed a job in Key West. While working in Key West, I met a beautiful woman named Sarah, whom I now call my wife.

I was lucky to find a job with Old Town Trolley Tours as soon as I moved down in May 2012. It’s been a great nine months working as a mechanic at OTT. I am fortunate enough to say that I work with a great group of people, from mechanics to administration. I hope to remain and grow here at OTT.

**Q** | What is your favorite vacation spot?
**A** | My favorite spot to vacation is Gatlinburg, Tennessee where my wife and I spent our honeymoon.

**Q** | What three things will you always find in my refrigerator?
**A** | Milk, CandyBars and Ketchup!

**Q** | What is your idea of perfect happiness?
**A** | My idea of perfect happiness is to be happy with the job that I have and health for my family.

**Q** | If there was one place you would like to live besides your current city, where would it be?
**A** | Scottsboro, Alabama. Scottsboro is in the Tennessee valley and the Tennessee River runs through it. Beautiful place!

**Q** | What is your favorite occupation?
**A** | Woodworking.

---

This is a local resident hitchhiking on trolley 82.

On October 30th, 2011 the Old Town Trolley and Conch Tour Train hosted their annual Children’s Day! This year they had the Southernmost Duck was on display for the kids and families to see.
Marqus Placencia is the kind of person who makes others feel great just by being around him. This quality makes him the ideal front desk agent, a position he has held at the Blue Marlin Motel for 11 years. He loves what he does and it shows.

When you walk into the Blue Marlin lobby you can’t miss him, not just because of his size, but because of his great smile, infectious laugh and overall friendly personality.

Besides being genuinely kind, friendly, and fun to be around, Marqus is special for another reason. In a community filled with people who come from somewhere else, he is part of the tightly-knit, proud community of Conchs – families who have lived on the tiny island for generations. Originally from Spain by way of Cuba, Key West has been home to Marqus’ family for five generations!

Like so many Conchs, Marqus would not live anywhere else. This is home. He loves the island life, the fabulous weather and the amazing turquoise water. A proud member of the Key West High Class of 1994, and with many of his friends and all his family – his mother, Juana, two sisters and several nieces and nephews – living in Key West too, he finds plenty to do on his days off. He parties, goes for bike rides around town with his nieces and nephews, hangs out at the beach and plays in the water.

The Blue Marlin Motel, distinctly painted the color of its namesake, is a 57-room property centered by a heated pool surrounded by tropical landscaping. It’s a welcoming place, because just like Marqus, the rest of the front office staff – Nataliya Kdnysheva, David Burnett, and manager Jessica Ortueta – are light-hearted and friendly. A comfortable place for families, the Blue Marlin is ideally located one block off upper Duval Street, just one block from the Atlantic Ocean, and three blocks from the Southernmost Point.

With Old Town Trolley Stop #10 just around the corner, Marqus sells lots of OTT tickets. For him, it’s an easy sell because of the convenience of having the trolley stop just around the corner, the two-day feature, and the on and off privileges. But for this Key West Conch, there is more. It’s about pride. He wants to show off his quaint, interesting, and colorful island to his guests. The Old Town Trolley tour does just that and more.
The Nation’s Storyteller

CONCH TOUR TRAIN

Celebrating 55 Years!
by Eva Conway, Conch Tour Train Operations Manager

The World Famous Conch Tour Train will be celebrating its 55th Anniversary January 20th 2013.

The Conch Tour Train started in 1958 by Bill and Olive Kroll. They started with one small ticket booth that was also the office and one train #97.

The Conch Tour Train has come a long way since then. There are 14 tour trains now. We also have two shuttle trains that are pulled by jeeps that we use for cruise ship transportation.

The train now has eight ticket booths on this little two by four mile island. We have nine if there is a cruise ship in and we share that booth with the trolley.

Several years ago we had a cast member that had an aunt that still had her train tickets that were $1 and the brochure from 1959. Some of you might remember Scott Lewis he worked for the trolley and the train in Key West in season.

We are looking forward to the next 55 years!

Parades and More...
by Laurie Skinner; Engineer

The Conch Tour Train just finished a very busy holiday season. We had holiday light tours, private charters, Veterans Day Parade and everyone’s favorite, the Key West Christmas Parade.

A huge standing ovation goes out to the Conch Tour Train Roundhouse CASTmembers for doing a great job keeping all the trains in great conditions with such a busy holiday schedule. We would also like to thank the Roundhouse CASTmembers for all their hard work getting the Southernmost Ducks ready for Splash down! We couldn’t do it without you.

Welcome back on board to Johnny Blanton and Larry “Dallas” Clearman. Johnny has returned for his second season with the Conch Tour Train. Dallas has returned from Boston where he was a conductor for Old Town Trolley and awarded “Rookie of the Year”

We wish everyone a happy and prosperous new year!
I was born in Oregon but spent most of my young adult life in Houston, Texas. For 20 years I worked as a computer technician and programmer.

In 2003 my brother, Dallas, after several conversations, convinced me to move to Key West. It was one of the best decisions I ever made and changed my life completely. I love driving the Conch Tour Train!

Three years ago, I really got into photography and have recently self-published a photo book “Spectacular Key West”. In January, I had my very first major art exhibition at the SoDu Gallery in Key West. The support and encouragement of my friends and Conch Tour family has been amazing.

Q | What is your idea of perfect happiness?
A | Living in Key West

Q | What do you consider your biggest achievement?
A | Three years of sobriety and counting!

Q | What is my most treasured possession?
A | My family and friends

Q | What do you most value in your friends?
A | Loyalty and honesty

Q | Who are my favorite writers?
A | Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities and Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Crime and Punishment
New Treasure Chest!
by Clinton Curry; KWSTM General Manager

On November 6, 2012, I had the distinct pleasure of meeting John Thomas upon his arrival to the Key West Shipwreck Treasures Museum with our newest display – the Treasure Chest! John and his wife Norma delivered the finely crafted chest, which will display treasures from *El Cazador*, a Spanish Brig of War which sank in the Gulf of Mexico in 1784 carrying over 450 million dollars in Spanish currency. *El Cazador* would remain lost until August 2, 1993, when Captain Jerry Murphy of the trawler named the “Mistake” snagged the bottom at nearly 300 feet. Upon raising the nets, the unmistakable sound of silver coins began pouring on the deck; the catch of a lifetime!

I would like to thank Mr. Thomas (John) and his craftsmen for their phenomenal job in fabrication and construction. A thank you to Monte Triz, no one can make new things look old better! Thanks to the CAST of the Harry S Truman Little White House and Executive Director Bob Wolz for providing accommodations during Mr. & Mrs. Thomas’s stay.

Wounded Warriors

On Sunday, January 13, 2013 over 50 Wounded Warriors rode into Key West, Florida raising awareness for the Wounded Warrior Project, whose mission is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors. The public lined the streets of Key West, waving flags and showing support for these Warriors. After a brief lunch stop at the Truman Waterfront, the Wounded Warriors departed on the Red, White and Blue Military Bike Tour. Accompanied by over 200 citizen cyclists, the Warriors stopped by many of the military memorials on the island and of course, the Southernmost Point. For the third year in a row I had the honor and privilege to serve as the Warriors guide, assisted by fellow CASTmember Jesse Panrock, who provided information for the citizen cyclists.

The Red, White and Blue Military Bike Tour concluded at the Key West – Florida Keys Historical Military Memorial in Mallory Square with a singing of “America the Beautiful” and dove release. Following the conclusion of the tour, the Warriors were then invited to a reception at the Harry S. Truman Little White House, where Executive Director Bob Wolz welcomed them and thanked them for their service. The Warriors accessed the grounds of the Harry S Truman Little White House through the Presidential Gates, which at one time would only be opened for visiting United States Presidents. I am grateful for the opportunity provided to me by the Military Affairs Committee in Key West, serving as a humble ambassador of my hometown, during the Wounded Warriors stay.

Happy Anniversary

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<tr>
<td>Pam Guin, 17 years</td>
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<td>Thomas Marmion, 13 years</td>
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<td>Hilda Perez, 13 years</td>
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<td>John David Kerr, 9 years</td>
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<td>Patrick Deja, 4 years</td>
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<td>Matthew Murphy, 3 years</td>
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<td>Nelson Nodal, 15 years</td>
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<td>Violeta Mihaylova, 9 years</td>
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<td>Harry Steele, 2 years</td>
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<td>Lisa Chubbuck, 1 year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marie Milice, 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randy Henson, 1 year</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DECEMBER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robert Wolz, 27 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton Curry, 14 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mihail Mihailov, 8 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Martinez, 3 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oksana Semashko, 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Bumstead, 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Averyt Jr., 2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rene LaPierre, 2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wayne Galloway Jr., 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erik Reighard, 1 year</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JANUARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leah Benner, 9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delores Boyle, 7 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pavel Theinert, 7 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Galyna Myakushak, 4 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tudor Cojusnean, 3 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sherry Wright, 3 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Sodders, 1 year</td>
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ON THE SPOT...

Mike Dulin
Entertainment and Production Supervisor
Key West Shipwreck Treasurers Museum, Ghosts and Gravestones

BACKGROUND
My entire adult life has been about stories and communication. I have been a free-lance journalist, an art critic, a founder and playwright of a surrealist theater company known as PunkSinatra, a conceptual artist, a writer of fiction and a teacher of college composition studies. I received a B.A. in cultural anthropology to learn about humans and continued my studies to receive an M.A. in Writing and Rhetoric so as to teach others how to write their own stories. How I came to Key West and work for HTA is a story of its own.

On August 1st 2011 my wife and I climbed into a canoe my father had given me when I was nine years old. For a while I had wanted to write a new story and so we decided to invent one. Setting off on the James River in our hometown of Richmond, Virginia we began to paddle toward the east. We had never even at this point been on an overnight canoe trip. Our plan was simple, to see how far we could carry a big dream in a small boat. Each day was a struggle filled with surprises and adventure. For 81 days, and 1,200 miles we lived in the 16 ft canoe as we made our way down the Intracoastal Waterway, taking it just one day at a time. And then in disbelief of our own attempt we came ashore on Cudjoe Key. For 81 days, and 1,200 miles we lived in the 16ft canoe as we made our way down the Intracoastal Waterway, taking it just one day at a time.

Q | If there was one place you would like to live besides your current city, where would it be?
A | Without a doubt — Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. With a landscape as vast as an ocean there are only four people per square mile in Mongolia. This is a country whose people are descended from Genghis Khan, the national sport is wrestling, the most popular drink is fermented horse milk, and you can live in a moveable, circular tent called a yurt. Call me simple, but this sounds like home to me.

Q | Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
A | MacGyver is me favorite hero of fiction. I mean, come on, the guy gets himself out of every possible situation solely using a combination of imagination and education. He doesn't focus on the problems, but the solutions. Although a little duct tape never hurts to have on hand.

Q | If you could choose one reality TV show to be on, what would it be?
A | I would unequivocally want to be on “Finding Bigfoot”. If you were able to find Bigfoot you would forever go down in crypto-zoological history. Then again nothing says job security like the continued search for a quasi-mythical creature - half the point is to never find him anyway.

ON THE SPOT...

Timothy Stroud
aka Benjamin Jonah, the Bone Island Body Hooker
Ghosts and Gravestones

TIMOTHY’S BACKGROUND
I was born in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. I have been a professional musician all my life, and have performed as a singer and keyboardist in venues all over the world. After spending some years as a cruise ship performer, I moved to Key West in 2010 and was hired immediately by HTA to be a ghost host. That is how I became Benjamin Jonah, the Bone Island Body Hooker.

I have been an athlete all of my life, playing hardball, softball, football, golf and tennis. One of my greatest achievements is still being able to play all of these sports — especially football and hardball — at the ripe old age of 55.

I enjoy being a full-time entertainer, and working for HTA has provided the perfect opportunity for me to do so. At some point soon, I plan to start performing again as a guitarist/singer here in Key West.

BENJAMIN’S BACKGROUND
I was born in Key West. I spent my whole life in Key West. I died in Key West. I guess you could call me a native Key Wester—or a true “Conch,” as we say down here.

Unlike my fellow Conchs, I didn’t have much luck workin’ as a fisherman. That’s why they started callin’ me a “Jonah,” a person who brings a curse to any type of boat. Since I couldn’t get work hookin’ up fish, I decided to start hookin’ up dead bodies instead.

The town of Key West paid me a dollar for every body I hooked up and toted out to sea for shark dinner, and I made a good livin’ down here, thanks to all those tropical-loving diseases such as tuberculosis and yellow fever. My only regret is that I didn’t live to become a millionaire. That’s because of a shark that had been following me around with an empty stomach and a gleam in his eye. Pretty soon, he had a full stomach — and I had a new gig as a ghost host for HTA.

Q | Which talent would you most like to have?
A | I would most like to have a supernatural ability of persuasion. To be a great master of diplomacy, to me, is more powerful than any loaded weapon.

Q | What do you most value in your friends?
A | What I most value in my friends is their open-mindedness. They all seem to possess an acute sense of fun, without judgment, that borders on the absurd.

Q | If there was one place you would like to live besides your current city, where would it be?
A | I was born in Key West. I spent my whole life in Key West. I died in Key West. I guess you could call me a native Key Wester—or a true “Conch,” as we say down here.

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**MALIBU AND CABO**

Proud Owner: Joanna Huestis; Human Resource Manager

Malibu, on the left, is the very dignified older brother who loves to sleep on the bed and have his belly rubbed.

Cabo, with his pretty blue eyes on the right, is playful, talkative and very social.

Both were rescued as kittens and although they are a few years apart, you can see they love each other. Anyone who thinks cats are aloof hasn’t met these two. They demand attention, meet me at the door and are never far from my side.”

These two beautiful boys are the children of Joanna and Eric Huestis.

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**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**

**SEPTEMBER**
- Nancy Aspinwall, 10 years
- James Lamberson, 10 years

**OCTOBER**
- Antoinette McPherson, 29 years
- Stephanie Monsalvatge, 11 years
- Marcus Davila, 10 years
- Ryan Darrah, 5 years

**NOVEMBER**
- Joseph Moyer, 32 years
- Debra Schepp, 22 years
- Magdalena Janicka, 8 years
- Jennifer Greg, 4 years
- Jennifer Mohnacky, 3 years

**DECEMBER**
- Marion “Hope” Casas, 24 years
- Freddy Varela Jr., 1 year

**JANUARY**
- Benjamin McPherson, 33 years
- Frank Herrada, 15 years
- James Sewell, 15 years

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**WELCOME ABOARD**

Candice Atwell
I am the youngest of three children and lived in Cleveland, Ohio until I moved to Columbus on a whim when I was 20 years old. There I graduated from Ohio State University with a BS in Corporate Training and Development. During my sophomore year, I adopted a rescue dog who had 1 week to live. I named him Artie. He was my first dog and is the love of my life. Of course the other love in my life is my husband Matt who I dated off and on since high school. We were destined to be together and married soon after graduation. Matt enlisted in the USCG which took us and both of our dogs, Artie and Bug, to Cape May, NJ and then to Key West.

Living in Key West we discovered the fun of boating and saltwater fishing. I am an avid runner and have recently completed my first half marathon and triathlon. My next adventure is moving back to Columbus in May to finish my Master of Science degree in Medical Dietetics.

Q | What is your idea of perfect happiness?
A | Perfect happiness has to be created on your own, wherever you are, with the right attitude and a positive outlook on life.

Q | What is your favorite vacation spot?
A | Anywhere with a beach, good food and a drink in my hand.

Q | What three things will you always find in my refrigerator?
A | Cheese, beer and eggs

Q | Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
A | Wonder Woman

Q | If you could choose one reality TV show to be on, what would it be?
A | The Real Coast Guard Wives of Key West

Storytelling in Historic Tours of America is the most important thing we do and consistently doing it well is not something that just anybody can do. It takes a special person who appreciates the past and enjoys sharing it with others. There can be only one Nation’s Storyteller.