AMERICAN BOMBSHELLS ROCK THE LITTLE WHITE HOUSE

by Monica Munoz; Marketing Coordinator, Historic Tours of America
and Ali Reeder, Founder of the American Bombshells

With hometown charm, pinup good looks, and a deep love of country the American Bombshells travel the globe spreading joy to patriots of all ages. Though the ladies hail from all parts of the United States and now currently reside in the Big Apple. Jenn Aedo, a big hearted, brassy singer and dancer hails all the way from Chino, California. Rayna Bertash, a fiery redhead fifth year member of the group is originally from Long Island, New York. As for their blonde Bombshell, Stephanie Leone, she’s a through and through Key West Conch native. Together these ladies serve as Ambassadors of America’s Gratitude to our nation’s heroes. Just this year alone Stephanie, Rayna, and Jenn have performed at Fox and Friends, The Today Show, The Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas, and had a three page spread in the New York Post. Some organizations they entertain include the Military Order of the Purple Heart, The Wounded Warrior Project, and US Veterans Corps. More than just a trio of dazzling beauties, the American Bombshells carry out a valiant mission for our nation’s Armed Forces, veterans, and wounded warriors.

American Bombshells Patriotic Services, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) charity organization with the mission to serve and honor our nation’s defenders, veterans and their families by supporting and creating unique programs that entertain, inspire, and strengthen communities. Commercial and corporate bookings help fund this mission of providing cost free morale and entertainment for military hospitals and bases. With eight American Bombshells in total, the ladies travel the country raising morale, giving smiles, sharing in song, and getting to know these incredible heroes. Ali Reeder, Founder and CEO, of the organization states, “Our heroes should know that they are never forgotten, and that America is eternally grateful for their sacrifices.”

The Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation exists for the purpose of protecting and preserving the building and grounds of the state-owned historic site known as the Harry S. Truman Little White House. President Truman spent 175 days of his presidency here between 1946-1952 and five additional post presidential visits from 1953-1974. The house served as command headquarters, and was used by Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy. In the early 1990s the house was restored after 12 years of abandonment. However, a wooden house of this size requires constant maintenance and repair. Although the house is owned by the state of Florida, the state does not contribute any dollars or services to the house.

On March 7, 2015 the Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation invited the American Bombshells to sing live onstage here in Key West as a fundraiser. In front of a crowd of over 500, the Bombshells wowed the audience. A modern day twist on the Andrews Sisters, the ladies serenaded in glorious three-part harmony to some of the greatest music spanning generations. We can’t wait to have them back again!

More pictures of the event on page 28...

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The Problem And Opportunity of Being Big

Chris Belland, CEO of Historic Tours of America

To me, the real magic of Disney’s “Magic Kingdom” is the survival and continuation of the culture after so many years.

In my lifetime, I have witnessed the rise and fall of many businesses across a wide array of industries. There was a time when certain department stores seemed like they were the future of business when they did not change their business model to what McDonald’s and Burger King came along and literally put them out of business when they did not change their business model to what people wanted.

Against this historical backdrop, you have but to go into a Home Depot or Wal-Mart today to see what I am talking about. There are very few businesses today where you will not be greeted by someone the moment you walk through the door. Inside, they are giving their customers what they want...vast selection, low prices, installation and free delivery. In short, whatever it takes. We no longer live in a “take it or leave it” world of consumerism. Corporate America is starting to get it, which means that despite what some pundits will tell you, people still want the human touch and pleasant assistance. In a word, service.

There is no greater example of how this translates into success than Disney World. First of all, believe me when I tell you from personal experience, there is no more structured, hard core disciplined competitor than the Walt Disney Corporation. They are tough. At the same time, they have exuded for many years a culture of cheerful politeness and an image of good, clean fun. For one, I think it is more than an image. I think they are all they hold themselves out to be but I sure would not want to compete against them. They are not run by Goofy and Snow White. I am not exactly sure how Disney has done it year after year but they have, even though they don’t pay very well, been able to attract and keep the best people with this attitude.

Of course, as you might imagine, there is a reason for my discussing this in the Nation’s Storyteller. In 1980, we started our first trolley company. I was the General Manager and we had 13 “employees”. We stole the concept of “CAST” from Disney and have since grown into a company of over 1100 CASTmembers, carrying in excess of two and a half million guests a year on our tours. We have tried, over the years, to instill in our new CASTmembers of the 21st century, the precepts, philosophy and concepts that brought us to this point. More than maintenance, finance, marketing and competition, this is the most difficult thing to do in our industry and, at the same time, the most essential. We have competitors who would like nothing better than to see us fall but we continue to disappoint them.

When we attract and keep the type of people who should be working in this business, the results are astounding. We are not perfect and sometimes we hire the wrong person. That is not to say they are a bad person, it is just that this business is not for them. Believe me, I know, as I read the comment cards week after week, month after month, year after year and it takes a very special person to truly want to do something nice for their fellow man by the simple act of being nice. Some people can put it on for a while but the true professional can do it consistently for their whole career.

Ed and I have the opportunity about every month to do orientation with new CASTmembers at headquarters in Key West. It is probably the single most important thing we do here. Above anything else, I wish we could do it in every city for every operation but as we have gotten big, we cannot. We used to, but time and distance now make that impossible. The communication of traditions, values and vision must now rest with us all as it does in the Disney company.

So, as I grow older and the company grows larger, we must all be looking for the folks who like the business we are in and, more than that, who we like to work with in the pursuit of our mission to be the “Nation’s Storyteller”. When I think about what we do every day which, in essence, is to try to make guests’ vacations better, it makes me smile and feel lucky to have the opportunity for, in a small way (or maybe not so small), I feel like I am doing the bidding of a Higher Power.
Can you sing it with me? ......”It’s all about the snow, about the snow......no trolleys”! We have been closed more days this year because of snow than any other I can remember. This winter was officially the snowiest ever recorded here in Boston, with a total of 108.6 inches having fallen thus far. In addition, February 2015 has gone down in the record books as the snowiest month and snowiest February ever recorded here in Boston. For a full month straight the city of Boston was hit with a major snow storm every five to seven days. We very quickly stopped counting the snowfall in inches and instead measured it in feet!

In the midst of all that snow there was a lot going on for the City of Boston and Old Town Trolley in February. The month started with the New England Patriots beating the Seattle Seahawks 28-24 and winning the Super Bowl. The official report is that the balls were fully inflated and they didn’t cheat.

Because of the recent blizzard and the massive snow banks all over town, the parade was postponed one day and held on Wednesday, February 4th. Because of the huge detours the parade would cause, OTT was shut down for the day. One of our sales depots, The Trolley Stop Store, is located right on the parade route. So, we decided to open the store for CASTmembers and friends as a place to stay warm and enjoy the parade. We also decided to park a trolley in front of the store in sight of the thousands of fans gathered to watch the parade. While clearing a space in the snow for the trolley to pull into, our team of Bob Gibson (Maintenance Manager), Jim Mehigan (Mechanic) and Charles Person (Head Conductor) encountered a young fan confined to a wheelchair looking for a place to view the parade. Without a second thought, our team sprang into action using our Bobcat and shovels to clear a spot for her and her family. Unbeknownst to our team, a local TV station was filming them from their viewing platform right across the street. This incredible act of kindness made the evening news. Then, the family of the young lady wrote a letter to the mayor of Boston commending OTT and our spectacular CASTmembers. These sorts of events do not go unnoticed by the entire HTA family. On Friday, February 27, 2015, Bobby Bernreuter presented our three hometown heroes with the very special E.S.P. award for their amazing act of kindness. Needless to say we are all very proud of Bob, Jim and Charlie.

We welcomed our second training class of the year in February with four conductor candidates; Arthur Dove, Julianna Bowker, Josh Nachbor and Paula Stour. Unfortunately their first day of class was cancelled due to one of the many snowstorms. However, the snow hasn’t stopped our latest class of rookies from jumping head first into learning all they can about trolleys and they are well on their way to being licensed and certified. Of course, learning how to drive a trolley in the snow is just part of the training here in Boston.

Old Town Trolley Tours of Boston received some fantastic news in the month of March...we were the safest HTA city in 2014! This is no small task and truly an amazing accomplishment considering the extremely busy year we had and the less than desirable staffing levels. Congratulations to the entire OTT Boston team for a job well done!
I had to leave sunny and warm Key West and travel to Boston this past February because the Patriots won the Super Bowl. Really! You see, that singular event set up a chain reaction that culminated in this visit. Stay with me on this, you must know that winning the Super Bowl requires a victory parade for the team in Boston. But, there was a terrible winter storm the night before the parade closing the streets and sidewalks, so Boston had to dig out once again. This caused the parade to be put off until the next day.

Now, not wanting to miss a marketing moment, the Old Town Trolley maintenance crew went down town to our Trolley Store and started clearing a parking space to place a trolley in a prominent position to be filmed during the parade. The mayor was there along with the local Channel 7 News Team to welcome the victorious New England Patriots.

It just so happened that close to the OTT parking space a family had gathered so their daughter, a loyal Patriot fan, could witness the victory parade. This letter to the mayor of Boston will tell the rest of the story:

Dear Mayor Walsh,

I would just like to share an act of kindness that I thought you might appreciate during these hectic days.

Like you, my family and I are huge Patriots fans. My daughter Christina and I were able to make it to the Patriots sendoff rally. Even though she is in a wheelchair we were able to maneuver around City Hall Plaza. We meet Jessica from the Disability Office who helped us out that day. She was very caring and helpful.

Today, we managed to get to Boston for the parade. After listening to the news reports, I was really nervous about Christina being able to get around. We luckily found a handicapped parking spot close to Boylston & Charles Street. We thought we were at a good viewing area until we saw the snow piles and slushy sidewalks. This is where this act of kindness needs to be shared. We met up with the great men from Old Town Trolley Tours - Charles Person and Bob Gibson - and a few other names that we didn’t get. They saw our issues and got their bobcat which was parked close by along with shovels and proceeded to clear the area so that Christina could make it through with her wheelchair. How awesome is that. To them it wasn’t a big deal but to us, this kindness meant so very much.

In this day and age, we need to recognize folks who go above and beyond and I just thought you needed to hear about these great people! Keep up the good work!

Sue and John DiTullio

James Mehigan, Bob Gibson, and Charles Person, CASTmembers of Old Town Trolley of Boston, while in performance of their duties recognized an opportunity to go above and beyond the normal aspects of their job and serve these visitors in an extraordinary way. This heroic act did not go unnoticed by the public or Channel 7 News, who were there broadcasting the parade. The whole event was captured by their cameras and displayed on their daily news segment. What a public relations coup for Old Town Trolley.

Through their determination, hard work, and response to the needs of these visitors to Boston, James, Bob, and Charles, have proven to be worthy of our company’s highest recognition and each are therefore awarded the Historic Tours of America E.S.P. award and a check for five hundred dollars.
Alaina Posluszny is a concierge at the Sheraton Boston hotel. Alaina was born and raised in Massachusetts and after graduating high school she majored in hospitality at Endicott College. Alaina’s first hospitality job was working as a front desk agent at the Charles Hotel. Soon after starting, she moved over to the concierge desk, and then went on to work as a concierge at the Intercontinental, the Fairmont Copley Plaza and as a corporate concierge for Tillinger’s before going to the Sheraton. Alaina enjoyed and learned from each job – the first at a small hotel, the second at a contemporary hotel, the third at formal historic hotel, next as a corporate concierge – and is now excited to be part of the team at the largest hotel in Boston. She is looking forward to new challenges and is enjoying the fast pace and large number of guests that approach her desk during a shift. At the end of the day, she feels fulfilled knowing that she gave it her all in helping her guests.

When asked by guests for the best way to see Boston, Alaina is happy to recommend the Old Town Trolley Tour. She likes that our drivers are friendly, enthusiastic, knowledgeable and reliable. Alaina also appreciates the high level of customer service we provide to the concierges. Overall, Alaina says, Old Town Trolley gives the most bang for the buck.

At the end of her work day, Alaina goes home to a house hand built by her husband and powered completely by the sun. Located 40 miles west of Boston, the 900 sq ft home sits on 1 acre of land and took six months to build. Alaina’s husband, David, did a tour in Afghanistan in 2011 with the army. This inspired him to do what he could to reduce his dependence on foreign oil. So, he built his own home and made sure it was “net zero.” That is, solar panels produce all the energy that is needed for electricity, heat, and hot water. When Alaina has free time, she enjoys running, wine tasting, and baking. Thank you Alaina for all you do to recommend Old Town Trolley Tours to your guests.

This is Daisy: she is an eight year old Cockapoo. I have always owned large breed dogs (100 plus pounds) but Daisy well she tips the scales at a modest twenty pounds. Being so small and from Boston she has to wear a bright jacket and boots so she doesn’t get lost and cold in the snow. There’s not a squirrel in my hometown that hasn’t been chased or barked at by her. I am convinced she understands the human language as her favorite spot is lying on the ottoman watching TV after a nice meal. She has never mastered playing fetch, she chases the ball but bringing it back is another issue. She has many different hobbies such as

Blow drying her hair after a bath  A trained Thespian actor in (Sandy) “Annie”  Giving HUGS all day long  She is an avid sailor  Loves the Camera  Lounging by the pool

facebook.com/bostontours twitter.com/bostontours
Giovanni Pantaleo
Tour Conductor; Old Town Trolley Tours of Boston

BACKGROUND
Giovanni Pantaleo is a Tour Conductor for Old Town Trolley Tours of Boston. He grew up in the North End of Boston. The North end is the Italian neighborhood as well as the oldest residential neighborhood in the city. The youngest of five children, Giovanni grew up with a traditional Italian upbringing. He attended Bunker Hill Community College in Charlestown, Massachusetts, majoring in Media Technology. Giovanni is very outgoing and his fun personality and charisma led him to pursue the arts and movies. As a member of the SAG-AFTRA guild, he has appeared in many movies that were filmed in New England.

Throughout his adult life, Giovanni has worked in the transportation industry. While working for a high-end limousine company, he discovered that chauffeurs were not supposed to talk to the guests. So, this brought him to Old Town Trolley. Here he would be able to interact with guests while, at the same time, working on his acting skills. Giovanni has been with OTT for two years now and is the self-proclaimed resident foodie. For the best places to eat in Boston, everyone asks Giovanni.

With a great love of his historic hometown, he plans on staying in Boston for a very long time.

Q | Which living person do you most admire?
A | Larry Bird, he grew up very poor, overcame great odds in the NBA and is a hero to all Bostonians.

Q | What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
A | My height, being 5’ 7”, I wish I was at least 6 feet tall.

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

Q | What is your favorite occupation?
A | Trolley tour conductor.

Q | If you could choose one reality TV show to be on, what would it be?
A | Jersey Shore.

Roger Dumont Takes New Position

Veteran Sales Rep, Roger Dumont, recently made a switch to the role of Concierge at the Boston Park Plaza hotel. This was the perfect fit for an individual who loves this city and sharing that enthusiasm with our visitors. The following was a review submitted by a guest at the Park Plaza that needs to be shared with you:

Here, however, is my rave: The Boston Park Plaza Hotel has one of the best, most knowledgeable, most helpful and infectiously friendly concierges I’ve ever met. His name is Roger, and he was relatively new on the job at the time of our visit (January 6-10, 2015). He helped us with directions, with restaurant recommendations, with sight-seeing suggestions, and with a car rental. He remembered my name as well as my wife’s, he greeted us whenever we walked by, making sure to remind us that whatever we needed, he was prepared to take care of.

It’s worth staying at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel just for this kind of friendly service.
Our winter 2014/2015 CAST appreciation event was held on Sunday, February 8, at Carmine’s Italian Restaurant in downtown Washington DC.

CASTmembers of Old Town Trolley Tours, DC Duck Tours and Arlington National Cemetery Tours all met at the barn, then took a trolley to meet other colleagues at Carmine’s for some good food, good drinks, good company, fellowship, laughter, “Of The Year” awards, and door prizes...whew! What an evening!

After feasting on some incredible Italian food served family style, we presented our 2014 Of-The-Year Awards. In addition to the monetary awards, winners were given a certificate and a marble trophy of the Washington Monument.

Our Conductor of the Year for 2014 award went to Eric “Mr. E” Whitehead. Eric has been with Old Town Trolley since March 2013 and was recently named Lead Conductor. He is consistently one of our top positive comment card recipients and is an exemplary CASTmember. Congratulations Mr. E!

Rookie Conductor of the Year went to Joe “Just Joe” Patterson. When I first saw Joe in orientation, I asked Eric Holmes how old Joe was. Our guests think it’s cute that he looks so young and is able to drive a 42’ stadium trolley. I had my doubts, seriously, but almost immediately after he began touring, it was obvious to those in-the-know that Joe was going to be an incredible tour conductor. Congratulations Just Joe!

Smiling, bubbly, outgoing and energetic are all words to describe Victoria “Vicki” Hogan, who is always willing to do what is needed of her. Vicki is always there for her teammates and assisting guest needs. These attributes, as well as her sales numbers, are why Victoria Hogan is our Sales Rep of the Year. Congratulations, Vicki!

Duck Captain of the Year went to Captain Stephen Heare. Captain Stephen consistently receives positive comment cards and to date, has not received even one negative card. His costume is an inspiration to all CASTmembers; always clean and pressed. His reliability is remarkable, he’s never late and manages to stay healthy enough to never take a sick day. He is always helpful and often performs duties and assumes responsibilities well beyond what is asked of him. Most of all, his teamwork, professionalism and guest relations skills are beyond reproach. Congratulations Captain Stephen!

The Rookie of The Year Award for 2014 was proudly presented to Captain Richard Rowe. Captain Richard has far exceeded what is expected of him and has more than just “grabbed the bull by
the horns”. His tour quality is amazing, along with the Ducking proficiency and his abilities to make every Duck trip very special for every guest that rides with him. His expertise is only exceeded by his willingness to work together to ensure everything is impeccable for his workmates and guests alike. Congratulations Captain Richard!

Supporting CASTmember of the Year was awarded to Mikel “Body Shop Mike” Godbolt. “BS Mike”, as I affectionately call him for obvious reasons, is one of those guys who, no matter what you need done, is there to help. I kid him mercilessly about his inability to hang a straight decal on a vehicle; but the truth is, he’s an ace for this operation. He tends to be the Joker of the day and sometimes is even the joke of the day. Always laughing and smiling, BS Mike is a great example of what it’s like to enjoy coming to work every day and having fun while you’re doing it. Congratulations, BS Mike!

These six individuals exhibited “The HTA Way” in 2014, and each of them is well-deserving of their award. Kudos go out to Eric, Joe, Vicki, Stephen, Richard and Mikel. You all deserve the awards and I couldn’t be prouder of you! Great job!!

After the awards presentation, we drew tickets for door prizes and this is when I realized just how crazy these folks are. You see peoples’ true sides when money is involved. Sidebar: Why does Abe Burgos always win something?

All in all, the event was a success. Thank you, Terrie Thomas, for striking the deal with Carmine’s and coming in under budget enough that we could afford the door prizes. You rock! …now everyone get back to work!

Thank You Adam!
by Eric Homles; Assistant General Manager

Because we’ve hired so many new CASTmembers recently, I wanted to say something to welcome and inspire them to become a valuable part of Washington, DC’s operation. It doesn’t matter which company or role they were hired for, at the end of the day, and more importantly at the end of the year, we are all one company. Let me share a thought with you about one of our tour conductors.

Every morning I wake up, I’m thankful for one more day to receiving and be a blessing. But there’s one thing that happens to me almost every morning, after arriving for work, that makes me realize how great it is to do what I do for a living. A CASTmember shares with me how he feels about his job. Every day Adam Johnson comes to work he lifts my spirits, and brightens my day. The first thing that comes out of his mouth is, “I love my job.” It doesn’t matter what the weather is like, what happened before he arrived for work, or what is waiting for him when he leaves work. He doesn’t just give his job 100%, he gives his job everything he has. Adam inspires me to come into work every day and give everything I have. Writing this has me thinking about a few other quotes about loving your job...

Steve Jobs said, “Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do.”

Confucius said, “Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.” (Thanks for this one Chris)

Dr. Martin Luther King said, “If you are called to be a street sweeper, go out and sweep streets like Michelangelo painted pictures. Sweep streets like Handel and Beethoven composed music. Sweep streets like Shakespeare wrote poetry. Sweep streets so well that the hosts of heaven and earth will have to pause and say, here lived a great street sweeper who swept his job well.”

To the entire CAST, I say thank you for everything you’ve done to ensure the success of your company. To our new CASTmembers, welcome to HTA, and try to follow in Adam’s footsteps. Love your job!

Thank you Adam, for reminding me of this on a daily basis!

Never Allow Success to Breed Complacency - A Safety Perspective
by Stephen O’Brien; Safety Officer

It’s energizing and fun to have successes to build on. OTT/WDC’s motivating slogan this year is a reminder to do just that; to experience success as a dynamic, attention-hungry process, not as a static state or condition. It’s obvious how ticket sales and customer service benefit from this sustained attention, but safety is a dynamic, attention-hungry process too!

We can and must build on our safety successes!

CASTmembers, did you personally resolve a safety issue last year...or bring it to the attention of someone who did? The HTA safety community thanks you for that and urges you to act on new observations you will make. Do you recall a “safety thing” you could have done but didn’t? That’s ok; it’s in the past, but be resolved to really make safety social and to communicate and act on your observations and insights.

An adage of safe driving experts is “conditions constantly change.” Have you been as interactive with your driving environment as you could have? Does your continued success rest on “reading” conditions faster and better? Does your vehicle’s speed always allow time for you to process all the information around you? Does your “self-talk” address the depth and complexity of all the things you must consider to drive safely?

As I write, the new calendar year is a recent memory, and the new fiscal year is fast approaching. Isn’t it true, though, that every day is the start of a great safety year? Build on your safety successes daily, and all other successes will follow!

Our Monuments by Moonlight Tour
Washington DC’s Premier Product
by Eric “Mr. E” Whitehead; Head Tour Conductor

Year after year, year round, our Monuments by Moonlight Tours have always been a work of art. Why else would people join us night after night in Washington DC’s coldest temperatures to take...
this particular tour? That’s a great question. All of our tours are memorable but the MBM tour stands above them all. Could it be the city itself? Well of course, but you can also see the same city by daylight. Is it our marketing of The MBM Tour? It’s marketed just like all of our other great products. Is it our fancy stadium trolleys? They also run during the day. Or is it our epic nighttime storytelling? After all we are the Nation’s Storyteller. I believe that has an awful lot to do with the success of our MBM tours. As conductors in our Nation’s Capital, we have a massive number of interesting stories to tell as we effortlessly move our guests around the world’s most beautiful city. But at night, we crank it up!! Turn down for what??”

Beginning with our soon-to-be World Famous ‘Sunset Tour’, our DC Conductors put on an entirely different hat than the one we wear during daylight hours. We create a nighttime vibe that is catered to give our guest a completely different view of our magnificent city the one they experienced on our fantastic day tours. As far as my personal night tour goes, I am “Mr. E” during the day but I turn into “Mystery” at night, adding a bit more intrigue to go along with the history of this storied city. We turn up the volume on our storytelling, and humor, and even though we pass many of the same attractions that we pass during the day, our entire story line changes up for the night tour. If you happen to have a guest that has been on your tour with a day pass and they happen to get on your tour at night, we wow them with completely, even more fascinating facts about our lovely city. Its current, it’s fun, it’s a monumental product.

The places that we choose to show our guests are also monumental. The President Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, the President Abraham Lincoln Memorial, The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Memorial, The IWO Jima Memorial, The Vietnam and Korean Veterans Memorials, The Washington Monument (the only monument in our Nation’s Capital) and of course, we like to add in the President Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, monumental. The President Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, monumental product.

The video ended up being about eight minutes. And after showing it to just a small number of people who’s opinions I trust, the video was ready for viewing. But that wasn’t enough. I also took three pictures off his Facebook page and plastered one wall in our briefing room with it. The response was amazing. In just raw footage, I have about three hours of people wishing Jerry a happy birthday. And oh my gosh! The response was amazing. In just raw footage, I have about three hours of people wishing Jerry a happy birthday.

Then it hit me!

There was an old episode of Cheers where Woody couldn’t afford a big gift for his girlfriend. So he wrote her a song. Since I have absolutely no talent in song writing, I decided to make a video of people wishing him a happy birthday. For three months, I asked as many people as I could to just send a video of themselves wishing Jerry a 50th birthday. And oh my gosh! The response was amazing. I thought as I ate my celery. How could I make this birthday, Jerry’s 50th, the biggest deal possible while spending very little money? Although, Jerry looks like a million bucks, and he’s worth twice that, I only want to spend about $10 cause, well...I’m the charter rep.

Then it hit me!

The first set of Arlingon mini busses got wrapped in the trolley barn

The following story has only a little bit of dramatization.

It was November 25, 2014. I was quietly eating my lunch reading Flags of Our Fathers for the 12th time, when all of the sudden, I heard a laugh. Not just any laugh mind you. One of those robust belly laughs that could probably have been heard all the way to Key West. “Who’s laugh was that?” I quietly pondered. I looked up and saw, in the pinkest shirt I’ve ever seen, and an amazingly color coordinated tie, Jerry Miller our General Manager.

Birthday Wishes
by Abe Burgos, Charter Rep

The video ended up being about eight minutes. And after showing it to just a small number of people who’s opinions I trust, it was ready for viewing. But that wasn’t enough. I also took three pictures off his Facebook page and plastered one wall in our briefing room with it. Eric Holmes got him a cake from one of his church managers get to eat like kings.

“Birthdays for a lot of people are important, but to me, my birthday honestly is not a big deal.” He stated taking out his homemade cheesecake to share with another CASTmember who had entered the room. Yep, General Managers get to eat like kings.

So I thought as I ate my celery. How could I make this birthday, Jerry’s 50th, the biggest deal possible while spending very little money? Although, Jerry looks like a million bucks, and he’s worth twice that, I only want to spend about $10 cause, well...I’m the charter rep.

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The video ended up being about eight minutes. And after showing it to just a small number of people who’s opinions I trust, it was ready for viewing. But that wasn’t enough. I also took three pictures off his Facebook page and plastered one wall in our briefing room with it. Eric Holmes got him a cake from one of his church members, and new Head Sales Rep Willie Dennard and I put 50 balloons in his personal bathroom.

I showed him the video during morning briefing and we all had cake. I want to thank everyone who participated in the video of his birthday wish. You can actually see the video on the DC Trolley Facebook page at www.facebook.com/washingtontours.

Say what you will about this guy, when he really tries, he can look pretty sharp.

“Abe, I had no idea it was your birthday. Why didn’t you tell anyone?” Jerry said while putting in his homemade succulent roast beef, roasted potatoes, and carrots in the microwave.

“Birthdays for a lot of people are important, but to me, my birthday honestly is not a big deal.” I stated as I ate my peanut butter sandwich.

Apparently, when you’re a General Manager you eat better than your charter rep.

“Well, my birthday is in February, so you better make it a big deal.” He stated taking out his homemade cheesecake to share with another CASTmember who had entered the room. Yep, General Managers get to eat like kings.

So I thought as I ate my celery. How could I make this birthday, Jerry’s 50th, the biggest deal possible while spending very little money? Although, Jerry looks like a million bucks, and he’s worth twice that, I only want to spend about $10 cause, well...I’m the charter rep.

Then it hit me!

There was an old episode of Cheers where Woody couldn’t afford a big gift for his girlfriend. So he wrote her a song. Since I have absolutely no talent in song writing, I decided to make a video of people wishing him a happy birthday. For three months, I asked as many people as I could to just send a video of themselves wishing Jerry a 50th birthday. And oh my gosh! The response was amazing. In just raw footage, I have about three hours of people wishing Jerry a happy birthday.

The video ended up being about eight minutes. And after showing it to just a small number of people who’s opinions I trust, it was ready for viewing. But that wasn’t enough. I also took three pictures off his Facebook page and plastered one wall in our briefing room with it. Eric Holmes got him a cake from one of his church members, and new Head Sales Rep Willie Dennard and I put 50 balloons in his personal bathroom.

I showed him the video during morning briefing and we all had cake. I want to thank everyone who participated in the video of his birthday wish. You can actually see the video on the DC Trolley Facebook page at www.facebook.com/washingtontours.

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During Rod’s last visit to DC, Terrie organized a team building event. I don’t think they were having fun.

During Rod’s last visit to DC, Terrie organized a team building event. I don’t think they were having fun.

Sometimes you just gotta have some fun.

Cousin Sam posing with an eager We the People student celebrating 14 years of the We the People tour.

The Nation’s Storyteller

10

The Nation’s Storyteller
This General Manager would observe, at least for Savannah, that the only difference between our “off season” and our “tour season” is the frenetic nature readily evident in our “tour season” but in the actual tour loop is significantly reduced and replaced by an equal level of insanity occasioned by the anthill having been tipped over whilst we attempt to stuff all our “off season strategizing, changes and implementation” into 45-60 days. Kudos to all our CASTmembers, new and old as we work to improve upon a tour product that is already boasting a refund rate of less than ½ a percent (.003%), while proudly boasting a 100% money back guarantee on everything we sell. We look forward to launching some great new initiatives, including becoming the first trolley tour in Savannah to boast GPS tracking available to all our guests. As for me, on top of herding the cats whose primary responsibility are my other Leadagers (recruiting, training, etc.) February and March find me working hard at establishing a budget for FY15-16, which starts on April 1, 2015. We are excited to be concluding our best year ever, but look forward to even greater strides in the year ahead. We have much to be proud of and I hope that when you look in the mirror you feel a great sense of accomplishment as it takes every single CASTmember’s dedication to COMMITMENT, ATTITUDE, SINCERITY and TRUST to make it happen at the level we are able to achieve. I look forward to sharing many wonderful announcements, successes and projects in the year ahead in addition to the wonderful initiatives discussed by my Leadagement CAST below.

Season is upon us and we have been making preparations for it. One of our smaller competitors recently went out of business which meant a reshuffling of the departure locations at the Visitors Center. We moved over one position which we believe will help us with our sales and the blue trolleys moved across the street to now be on our left. This meant we would be challenged with being able to stage the rush of guest that we get from 10:15am until after 1:00pm. Before the change we could stage them down the sidewalk in front of the trolley but that option now was gone. We purchased stanchions (these are the kinds of line management tools you see at movie theaters, etc.) to create a snaking queue beside the trolley. We have been using this method and it seems to be working well so far. The limited amount of room at the Visitors Center creates a safety issue for the guests without proper planning of this. We have also been successful in petitioning the city to have the entire row of parking behind the trolley departure location as compact car only. This will help immensely as we now don’t have to contend with the double cab pickup trucks with long hitches that love to park directly in the trolley backing area. We have also started to run tours out of the Welcome Center. We purchased more stanchions to create a queue there to help manage the line. The ultimate goal with running tours out of the Welcome Center is to relieve the Visitors Center of transfers starting from there and to avoid making the guests ride one stop and have to disembark and re-board.

St. Patrick’s Day is just around the corner on March 17. Savannah’s population swells by about 400% and they all seem to want to be in the Historic District at the same time. This is the only day per year that we don’t run tours because you just can’t get around due to the parade and number of folks in town. It creates plenty of challenges like having River Street closed to traffic so we can’t get to stop 11 or run the ghost tour from their normal departure location. Even through all of the challenges of the four day celebration for the guest it’s business as usual...no problems.

Our Training Officer par excellence, Kayla Black, has been working diligently to get our spring training class completed. As of my writing this we have hired 10 new daytime tour Conductors and trained Ellis Cook who had been a Ghost Conductor. We are down to the last three completing their training in the next couple of weeks and they are Travis Easter, Emily Mason and Kevin Dills. Congratulations on completing training and certifying to George Hickman, Greg Black, Big Momma (Heidi Zoll), Richard Bruneau, Lea Adams, Tom Jacoby and Scott Brown. We are really glad to have them join the OTT Savannah team! Recruiting continues for Conductors and Kayla just keeps on training.
We continue to implement the GPS system into our operations. We are almost ready to go live for the guests with the route predictions of time for the next trolley into a stop, which they will be able to see with a smart phone or tablet. This is going to be a huge help for the guests as they wait for the next trolley at a stop. This fall we are having an upgrade made to the Syncromatics system that will also allow the guests to be able to see how many seats are available also.

Max Haas was selected as the Engagement Coordinator at the Welcome Center. We had quite a few great internal applicants for the position. Max has been rocking the results there since he moved into the position the middle of February. The first three weeks the sales there were up 45%, 23% and 51% versus goal. It will be very interesting to see how things work out when the goals increase for season.

The first annual “Rodeo” will take place on March 17 at our partner Red Gate Farms RV Park. This is modeled on the trucker’s rodeos that are so popular with the big rigs. This idea came about from Conductor Larry Floyd’s self-evaluation this year. See folks... we really do read these and appreciate your suggestions for improvement. When I read his suggestion I thought “why not”. We will have five driving skill events and a quiz that covers safety, tour ordinances, scripts and other things important to Conductors. The winning team will get some great prizes including making their own work schedule for a week. For kids we will have games and food for everyone. We will have a lot of fun with this and next year we may be including our other trolley tour competitors in the city for the championship of Savannah.

Congratulations to Dennis Pellegrino and Ruben Alegria who have completed dispatcher training. Both have been rookies of the year for the last two years and are learning new things and taking on additional responsibilities. Being a dispatcher is the most difficult position we have and both have taken to it like a duck to water.

We have standardized the script for the Haunted History tour and all of the Conductors are being retrained. We are also beginning the development of a Civil War, African American and Low-country Culture tour. These specialty tours will help our Charter department sell to those groups that want “something a little different”. Who knows where we might be able to go with these kinds of additional tour products?

**Safety**

by Kenny Gresham; Safety and Training Officer

Irenette Clark has set the bar high for safe driving excellence in Savannah. She is receiving her eight year safe driver pin. I take my hat off to all those safe drivers from six months to the unprecedented eight years. Driving safely around Savannah takes a tremendous amount of effort. Driving around the tight squares with the many art school students majoring in cell phone usage is a task. It was tough when I started 18 years ago, but I believe the degree of difficulty has quadrupled. Thanks to all that make my life so much easier.

We are going to have a conductor rodeo on March 17th, St. Patrick’s Day. Only day of the year we don’t operate tours. This will actually be a family day for our cast members. We’re going to have fun and games and five driving exercises such as parallel parking (with a trolley), off set backing, serpentine course with cones, pulling up to point with a golf ball on a cone, and my just finished project titled, “How to pull away from a stop that was made in the street because the infamous illegally parked car or Old Savannah Trolley once again was camped out in our stop”.

Last year, hitting the parked auto that was unfortunate enough to be parked behind the illegal by our unsuspecting conductor, who was pulling away from unfamiliar stop in the street and forgot to check his mirrors one last time, was our number one accident. My project is the orange VW that is pictured. I will use cones to tighten the lane and have our trolleys make a left away from the VW pulling into the lane from an imaginary stop. The object is to watch the right rear swing trying not to hit the car. The tighter the better. The plywood is about ¾ inch thick so it can take some pain. The VW is on a stand with rollers so that we can easily roll it in and out for training. I actually wanted a replica of a Volvo or BMW since we usually hit high dollar cars in Savannah.

I’ve harped on watching the right tail swing over the years and actually had a poster made with a drawing of this type of accident. It seems that experience is the best teacher even better than my bellowing “Don’t hit nothin’”. Especially an experience that is inexpensive like plywood.
Vendor Happenings
by Bob “Colonel” Hunter; Vendor Representative

Only days away from completing another great year here in Savannah Georgia!

The vendor department is alive and well we have added many new vendors while strengthening the relationships with those that we’ve had for years. We should finish about $180,000 over budget and we are very happy with those figures!

Greetings from the Grave
by Garry Patrick; Ghosts & Gravestones Manager

January and February are traditionally the chilliest months in Savannah and we try to keep warm by training new Ghost Hosts and Conductors. Hats off to Travis our lead actor on the successful training of our latest batch of talented individuals! We welcome Ashleigh, Adam and Mark to the CAST and we wish them well for the season. We currently have a few more folks in the training pipeline and should be good to go by March.

Our tour is moving ahead in leaps and bounds and the addition of the Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace has been well received. I am looking forward to the summer months ahead and the nice air conditioning inside the house to keep our guests cool!

A special thanks to the CAST and in particular Sweet Sadie and Johnny for their excellent work with Trip Advisor reviews. Keep up the great work! See you next time.

Depot Sales
by Jim Rafferty; Depot Sales

January and February where fantastic months for being the “off” season. For the most part we had pretty decent weather and if these two months are any indication of what’s to come we are in for a great season.

January is the month were we are in hiring and training mode. We have added Kaite Geertz to our sales staff. Dominique White and Claire Rosplock to our concierge staff. They have completed training and are out in the field doing a terrific job.

We had our annual Holiday Party in January which was a big success and fun was had by all. We announced Rance Shell as Sales Rep of the Month for November, rookie Mark Sullivan as Sales Rep of the Month for December. A big congratulation to Jane Erskine, Sales Rep of the Year. Well deserved, and a fantastic job by all.

As I write this we are now officially in season. We have been gearing up and getting our game faces on. We are looking forward to a great beginning to a long season. I have confidence in the sales team to continue to perform at the highest level.

Human Resources
by Renee Mercer; Human Resources Manager

Season’s Greetings...touring season in Savannah, that is! To keep up with the demand, we need amazing Tour Guides and so the past few months have been busy months for recruitment! Finding the best doesn’t happen quickly...or easily. So far in the process for Conductors, however, we have been lucky enough to have 10 lovers of both Savannah and people, join our team: Lea, Greg, Richard, Thomas, Travis, Kevin, Emily, Heidi, George, and Scott. A warm welcome also goes out to our new member of Maintenance, Al and several new Ghost & Gravestone employees: Ashleigh, Jessica, Adam, and Mark.

In the coming month we are looking forward to adding ten more conductors and a couple of drivers for our Ghosts and Gravestones program. We are also looking forward to our warmer weather and to winning the “Walk for my healthy heart” initiative! We’ve no doubt that all of our endeavors will be met with success. Go Team!

Holy Mackerel!
by Kayla Black; Training

These have been a very busy couple of months. Lots and lots to do and not a whole lot of time to do it in! We started the month off knee deep in training for the Smith System, which is a safe driver program. It’s an intense four hours of training, and I’m proud to say that everyone who took the course passed with flying colors. This means safe driving and insurance discounts all around! Next came time to start training for our new Haunted History script. Although we’ve had a Haunted History tour for many years, we’ve worked to create a more streamlined and cohesive product. To date, twenty two drivers have certified! That’s amazing! We also initiated our Go Green Initiative this past month, which meant creating a mug rack for the kitchen (no more Styrofoam cups), recycling bins in the building (for mixed recycling) and a swap out of many of our old products for new eco-friendly versions. Thank you to Renee Mercer, HR Manager, and Larry Strong, our handyman, for all the work they put in to get the Go Green Initiative up and running. Through this
Jasmine Pate is one of the fine Concierges at the Bluegreen Studio Homes. Originally from Parsippany, NJ, Jasmine moved to Savannah in 2013. “The first tour I rode in Savannah was with Old Town Trolley and I learned so much! My tour guides were very knowledgeable and I didn’t hear the same story twice!” We look forward to working with Jasmine and know she’ll be an asset to Old Town Trolley of Savannah!

all, we’ve been training the new rookie conductors. Congratulations to George Hickman, Ellis Cook, Scott Leekley, Heidi Zoll, Lea Adams, Richard Bruneau and Tom Jacoby for certifying.

Groups and Charters
by Marcie Covington; Group Sales Manager

There isn’t a more beautiful and romantic city to get married in! Valentine’s Day Weddings in the Davenport House Garden, with ceremonies every 10 minutes. Getting married in the museum’s beautiful courtyard garden and make it a Valentine’s Day to remember! A local judge officiates and the donations from the couples go toward the maintenance of the Davenport House Museum.

We can’t forget about our beginnings! Georgia Day Parade, March 12, thousands of costumed local elementary school children march behind their hand-made banners in commemoration of Georgia’s founding in 1733. A colorful parade of students, musicians, local dignitaries, and costumed characters is preceded by a military color guard and marching band. Beginning at Forsyth Park and continuing around all five squares it ends in front of City Hall, where the mayor and other officials bring greetings and present awards for the annual Banner Competition.

It wouldn’t be Savannah without celebrating our Irish heritage! You must experience Savannah’s Irish Festival! Stroll through Savannah, the historic hostess city, and enjoy the largest Irish Festival in the South! And of course we love the greening of the fountains. All of our fountains flow with emerald green water the week before St. Patrick’s Day. Then the city becomes a sea of orange and green! You know we love that color. You will find green dogs leading their master that’s dressed head to toe in green. Oh, don’t forget our famous green grits! They are very festive covered with cheddar cheese. Come and enjoy!!!!
I grew up exploring the mountains and rivers of Northern New Jersey. My parents raised me with a healthy love of animals, knowledge, and the company of others. Our vacations were in a different state every year. I’ve spent a good bit of my life in hotels, amusement parks, historic sites, beaches, and just about any other tourist attraction you could name.

Savannah cast its spell on me in 2010 when I began studying Theatre at Armstrong State University. It was love at first sight. The desire to work in the tourism industry first began to surface in me after working at a bed and breakfast in Sarrance, France in 2012 where interacting with the guests was by far the highlight of my days. I was directed by a NYC tour guide at Pioneer Playhouse in Danville, KY who advised me that it might be something I should look into. During my final semester at Armstrong, Garry Patrick and Jon Watkins did a recruitment presentation for my department and, well, how could I resist?

I graduated from Armstrong with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre Performance in December 2013 and almost immediately started orientation with Old Town Trolley. I’ve been a Ghost Host with Ghosts & Gravestones since February 2014 and I’ve been working in the Lead Actor position since April 2014. I really can’t express how much I enjoy doing what I do. There’s something enormously magical about becoming part of someone’s vacation, one of the very things that made my childhood so special. There are few feelings that beat watching a new tour product get up and running or hearing about a Ghost Host’s first successful night giving tours. The value of getting to work somewhere you love is certainly not lost on me.

Q | What is your idea of perfect happiness?
A | Leave me in the mountains with a few friends, my books, and a heavy supply of coffee and you may never see me again. That’s the life.

Q | What is your greatest fear?
A | Losing my optimism. I don’t want my passion and zest for life to ever go away. My enthusiasm is very much a part of who I am.

Q | What is your most treasured possession?
A | My copy of the Complete Works of William Shakespeare. I love all theatre, but Shakespeare lights a fire in me that is impossible to extinguish. I want to carve a life for myself being a part of his work so that book very much represents my future to me.

Q | What three things will you always find in my refrigerator?
A | Eggs, a variety of cheeses, and some sort of unbelievably spicy condiment.

Q | What do you consider your greatest achievement?
A | Everything. It’s really quite overwhelming to think about. Big or small, I’ve accomplished everything I’ve set my mind to so far. I refuse to be deterred; I’m stubborn in the best way possible.
Greetings from Washington, DC
Photos from the 2014 Holiday Party

[Collage of pictures of people]
SAN DIEGO

SEAL Tours Recognized
by Mark Keeler, Head SEAL

We were received very well by John Campbell and the people of the Outboard Boating Club. They had a lot of nice things to say about us and were very grateful to receive the Certificate of Appreciation we presented to them at the Bay Club Hotel. I gave them some more SEAL brochures that they hand out to so many people who ask them about the SEAL Tour. I am arranging to take them on a tour that will originate at their club house overlooking the launch ramp and return them there. They have invited the crew of their tour to join them at a Bar-B-Q at the end of the tour.

USS Carl Vinson Visit
by Erica Frost; Group Sales and Charters

USS Carl Vinson families await departure from Seaport Village to enjoy a site seeing tour of downtown San Diego and a sail around the San Diego Harbor. The Vinson Family Readiness Group is a group of volunteers that donate their time to support the families of over 5,000 sailors by providing morale boosting activities and family support.

Safe Driving Awards
by Bob Ross, Safety Officer

Old Town Trolley San Diego operates six wheelchair lift equipped trolleys and five accessible amphibious SEAL tour vehicles. Every February we conduct hands-on wheelchair lift operation refresher training for all Conductors, Captains, and 1st Mates.

Leadagement Team Field Trip to Newly Opened Museum of Man Tower
by Scott Schwarz Advertising Sales Representative

San Diego’s Museum of Man in Balboa Park is a local treasure and example of Spanish Baroque architecture. This beautiful building was built as part of California-Panama Exposition and was the personal project of lead exposition designer Bertram Goodhue, 100 years ago. While its style, color, and shape matches with the rest its surroundings, the detail and elaborate tower give it an elegance that makes this building truly outstanding.

The tower has stood over the park for the last eighty years, with millions passing underneath and inquiring about climbing it. Sadly, the tower has been unsafe to climb since the 1930s -- until now. The Museum of Man decided the best way to celebrate the 100th birthday of Balboa Park was to rehabilitate the tower and invite groups of people to enjoy the spectacular view.

On February 26th, David Thornton hosted a Leadager outing which included climbing the more than 120 steps to reach the viewing
platform eleven stories up. Clouds hung far off on the horizon but one quarter of San Diego County was visible; an area roughly the size of Rhode Island. The guide pointed out a red tail hawk nest on the dome below us and minutes later the male hawk flew over to land on the top of the tower. Mexico was obscured, but the harbor was in clear view and staff busied themselves by finding all the neighborhood landmarks. The event was filled with information about history, nature, current events and the future of the park. It immediately made our “must-see” list.

Embarcadero Ticket Booth Opens  
by Teresa Lampert, Depot Sales Manager

After a year of set-backs and delays, we are very excited to have opened our new Old Town Trolley and SEAL Embarcadero ticket booth in February. The $31 million redeveloped Embarcadero area on the San Diego Harbor waterfront includes a new pedestrian promenade with beautiful jacaranda and palm trees, two pavilions with several attractions, restroom facilities, bike paths, tables and chairs. Nearby, a new San Diego Visitor Information Center and a café will open in the very near future.

Our new ticket booth can accommodate four sales stations and the booth is equipped with four TV monitors for videos and ticket menu boards. The new booth is conveniently located adjacent to both our Trolley and SEAL stop. Our Sales Team has provided increased guest service levels with the result being increases in sales and inquiries about other San Diego attractions and general information.

Having the Old Town Trolley and SEAL Tours stop so close to our ticket depot is phenomenal, as it gives us tremendous visibility from the street level, as well as for walking guests from cruise ships, conventions, and local San Diegans.

Orlando Montano, a Sales CASTmember, stated that, “Local residents, who have seen the Embarcadero’s recent renovation, really like the new look and feel of it. Our new booth is very spacious, professional and approachable”. Savanna Allen, another Sales CASTmember commented that, “Having a first class location makes our commitment to providing the best customer service an enjoyable and rewarding job”.

So, the next time you travel to San Diego, come down to the Embarcadero on the bay and visit us.

Hiring for the Season  
by Erin Smith; Office Manager

Sales Reps, and SEAL Guides, and Drivers, oh my! We are getting excited as the time is coming to welcome back our seasonal CASTmembers and welcome new hires! Each department is gearing up and on the search for what they need. The Sales Department is on the hunt for Sales Reps who will shine bright as star players with their experience and knowledge of San Diego tourism. They will sell all the tours and guide tourists to unforgettable attractions in our new Visitor’s Center opening in April! The SEAL Department is preparing for bigger crowds at our new Embarcadero stop, along with our Seaport Village location, and bigger crowds mean more tours. We will need several SEAL Captains and several SEAL Guides to keep up with demand! Last, but definitely not least, is our Operations Department who will be welcoming back several returning Conductors and hiring several new ones. As we are running the La Jolla/Mission Beach tour seven days a week and making more Ghosts & Gravestones Tours available, our growing staff of conductors will have their work cut out for them! Everyone has been working together to prepare and we look forward to our season.

OTT Supports the YMCA  
by Carmen Thulin; AR/AP Manager

Shannon Pavell (Fundraising and Marketing Director) and Ken Stimeling (Board of Management) with the YMCA Youth & Family Services were at our February monthly meeting to talk about the YFS fundraising efforts. The money collected goes to services to help youth & families become self-sufficient, productive and connected to the community. I personally met a young lady who was sleeping in the bushes outside her school so she wouldn’t be late as she was homeless. As a result of our support, she finished High School and is now in City College. As of this writing we’ve raised $169,000 which exceeded our goal! At our Campaign Victory celebration, I was awarded Rookie of the Year (Board member). I feel privileged to be on the Board of Management that helps our youth.
old town trolley tours of san diego

Mardi Gras in San Diego

Laissez les bon temps rouler! Old Town Trolley’s Beach Cruiser got a chance to cruise through our annual Mardi Gras parade.

CASTmember Gina Urbina, CAST Friend and Family Margaret Hess, Josh Lampert

Nancy Nuhairy, former CASTmember Kathy and Erin Smith experiencing the Mardi Gras parade on the Ghosts & Gravestones Trolley. Who wants beads?!

Ticket Booth Remodel

Maintenance and our February Supporting CASTmember of the month, Isaías Velázquez and maintenance manager Albert Guzman work together remodeling our old harbor booth to make it pretty for its new home at Horton Plaza

Rod’s Travels

Rod LaBranche with Kathleen Heerwagen of New World Travel and Benjamin Eastman of the San Diego Tourism Authority at the Los Angeles Receptive Operator Event

Trailers Removed

Our former old office trailers were no longer needed and were sold. The extra space in the Trolley Barn is welcomed news to our maintenance and mechanic team. The extra space is needed for additional SEAL and Trolley vehicles as we continue to grow our business.

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Rod LaBranche, Chairman of the San Diego Tourism Authority, speaking at the San Diego Tourism Authority's Annual Meeting
In The Kitchen With...

David Thornton

Milanesa Napolitana

Milanesa napolitana is a variation on the breaded fried steak called milanesa that is popular in Argentina and Uruguay. Milanesa napolitana is similar to veal parmesan, but with South American touches - after the steak is breaded and fried, it’s topped with a slice of ham, tomato sauce, and melted mozzarella cheese, and served with fries. Leftovers make great sandwiches, especially when paired with a soft but crusty roll.

Ingredients
- 4 thinly sliced chicken fillets
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning or oregano
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 cups fresh bread crumbs
- 1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1/3 cup olive oil or vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 4 slices of deli ham
- 1/4 cup grated Mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce

Directions
1. Place the eggs in a shallow bowl or pan, and whisk them together with the oregano and some salt and pepper.
2. Stir the parmesan cheese and garlic into the bread crumbs and place them in another shallow pan.
3. Dip the steaks first in the egg mixture, then in the bread crumbs, coating them well with the crumbs.
4. Heat the olive oil in a heavy skillet, and cook steaks for several minutes on each side, until golden brown and crispy. Drain steaks on paper towels.
5. Place steaks on a baking sheet. Turn on oven broiler. Top each steak with a slice of ham, 2-3 tablespoons tomato sauce, and 1/4 cup grated Mozzarella cheese. Sprinkle Italian seasoning over the cheese and place steaks under broiler until cheese melts.
6. Serve warm, with fries.

...and the Oscar Winner is Nancy Nuhaily!

Nancy was overjoyed with her Oscar basket! She wants to thank everyone for this special honor and for her daughter Victoria who helped her pick and decide on her choices.

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HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

FEBRUARY
Robert Williams, 13 years
Steven Brooks, 8 years
Vidal Sisneros, 7 years
Craig Johnson, 1 year
Jerrale Morris, 1 year
Jack Vernon II, 1 year
SEALS
James Saffer, 11 years

MARCH
Harold Henson-Dozier, 21 years
Rick Diaz, 21 years
Erica Frost, 17 years
Saul Alba, 13 years
Debbie Hildebrand 10 years
Evan Kohler, 6 years
Scott Schwarz 5 years
Gina Urbina, 2 years
Jeffrey Love, 2 years
Brian Richard, 2 years
Christopher Rosal, 2 years
Stephen Scott, 2 years
David Erdman, 2 years
SEALS
James Murphy Jr., 2 years
Heidi Aylen, 2 years

February - March 2015
This month I would like to showcase the Hyatt Regency Mission Bay Spa & Marina which promises incredible amenities, easy access to San Diego attractions, and impeccable service from a welcoming Concierge and Bellstaff. The hotel sits on beautiful Mission Bay and has an award winning pool with two waterslides. They have 429 guest rooms as well as the first “Eco-Friendly” Spa in San Diego and their waterfront farm to table restaurant called “Red Marlin”. The Concierge and Bellstaff have been selling our tours for over 20 years. The Concierge Staff is led by Martha Torres who has been there for 6 years and is currently the Treasurer of the San Diego Concierge Association. The staff also includes Justin, the Guest Services Supervisor, Sabrina, Madeline and Katelyn. The Bellstaff includes Terry who has been there over 34 years as well as Mike over 20 years and Rick, Duane and John just to name a few who have worked there for many years as well. Old Town Trolley runs a complimentary shuttle to the hotel and they are one of our top accounts. We thank the entire team at the Hyatt Regency Mission Bay for all their wonderful support!

I was born May 3 in Queens, NY. At the age of 8, my parents decided to leave the city and head out west. I grew up in Phoenix, Arizona with my older sister and parents. Every summer my family would escape the Arizona desert and vacation in Ocean Beach, CA. I can still remember our first family vacation in San Diego way back in 1979, the drive was so boring and all you could see for miles was desert and mountains. There were no cell phones, no Game Boys and no movies to watch. All we had was our 8 track tapes and my walk-man. Once we passed one mountain range there was another with nothing in-between. Finally after 6 hours of driving we arrived in Ocean Beach, it was heaven on earth! Year after year, I said to my parents that I want to live here one day and after 28 years in Phoenix I was able to relocate to my second favorite city in the world, San Diego.

After working 15 years in the non-profit field I found myself at a crossroads and wasn’t sure what I wanted to do next. I was speaking with a friend one day and he suggested applying for a sales position with Old Town Trolley Tours. I had several years of sales, marketing and customer relations experience in the non-profit field and liked helping people so I thought this would be a great position for me to utilize all of my skills. I started with OTT as a part time sales position to test the waters and found myself really enjoying the position and meeting guests from all over the world and providing them with all of the tools they need to have their best vacation experience ever. One of the things I really enjoy about working with OTT is being able to assist guests in planning their day with us. One of my favorite tools to use is the souvenir “walking guide book” Essential Guide to San Diego. The book not only lists all of the sites to see when you depart at each stop but it lists the sites in order so the guests don’t get lost and has a detailed map in the back so the guest can plan out how much time to spend at each stop. Once the guests see the book, it’s an easy sale. The guide is so well put-together and helpful that 9% of my sales are to people who don’t take the tour but are going to explore San Diego on their own.

In my spare time, I like to explore San Diego, spend time outdoors, take my two rescue dogs, nine year old German Shepherd/Chow, Izzy, and my three year old Bull Terrier/Australian Cattle Dog, Sadie, to dog beach, dog park and just about everywhere else. I also like volunteering and supporting local non-profit organizations.

Martha Torres
Hyatt Regency Mission Bay Spa and Marina
by Rod LaBranche; Director of Travel Industry Sales
Thank You DC!
by Linda Test, Key West General Manager

As everyone else in the country is gearing up for their busy summer season, we are coasting into our slower time of year. Since December, we have entertained 160,000 guests, and we’re so grateful for the help provided by DC drivers Gary Barr, Darin DelRosario, and John Snyder. Their time in Key West was hectic and busy as they learned about cruise ships, shuttles, and road construction in the Keys, and we are sincerely appreciative that they spent their winter with us. And, they didn’t have to shovel sunshine!

And as both our fiscal year and our season draw to an end, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the Key West Operations team. Nothing happens until a ticket is sold by our outstanding sales team; we wouldn’t have a product to sell if it wasn’t for our dedicated tour guides; the vehicles wouldn’t roll without a skilled maintenance team; and the support from our administrative staff ensures the I’s are dotted and T’s are crossed. Thank you to the group of professionals that make Key West the best place to be!

The World of Charters
by Tammy Osterhoudt, Groups and Charters

On March 11, 2015, my assistant Tiffany and I participated in the first annual Gay Key West Same-Sex Wedding Expo hosted by the Key West Business Guild at the Marriott Beachside.

The exhibitor turnout was huge as many local wedding planners, photographers, florists, bakeries, hotels, restaurants and other wedding related businesses flaunted themselves to prospective couples.

A lucky couple will also have the opportunity to win a “Wedding Experience” Transportation/Tour aboard the Old Town Trolley or Conch Tour Train compliments of the Key West Group Sales office.

Not a favor went to waste as the night came to a close with the wedding ceremony of Richard and Ronnie of Gourmet Nibbles and Baskets who shared not only their special moment but their cake and hors d’oeuvres too.

Angelina Guesthouse
by Cheryl Actor; Director of Account Sales

Kevin and Janet Life are the proud owners of this gentle lady, The Angelina. Along with a wonderful staff, you will be greeted with warm southern hospitality upon your arrival. They can help you plan and arrange your stay with recommendations of where to eat, drink, fish, dive, snorkel, visit attractions and historic sites, theatres, and of course taking the Old Town Trolley Tour as one of the first things to do to familiarize yourself with our Key West island paradise.

Angelina Guesthouse has a very colorful history, and the stories they will tell you about the property will have you asking for more. It was once a 1920’s bordello and gambling spot. Now it is a friendly and clean bed & breakfast with no phones or televisions, appealing to an adult crowd looking for a quiet and peaceful place to escape. When you are ready to party, Duval Street is only a short 2 block walk.

You will want to spend lots of time lounging by the heated lagoon style pool surrounded by lush tropical plants. Set yourself in one of the poolside hammocks, sip a drink, read a book or just allow yourself to doze off while listening to the soft trickling of the waterfall. Patio tables are available, as well, to sit at and enjoy your breakfast.

To find this true island guesthouse just follow your nose. The early morning aroma of baking homemade cinnamon rolls will lead you straight to the front porch and into the foyer, located right next to the kitchen. No one can resist eating a cinnamon roll followed by a delicious cup of their special coffee.
**BACKGROUND**
I grew up in suburban Denver and lived there until the early 1990s. After leaving Colorado, I lived in southern Japan, northern California and Nevada before settling in Key West 7 years ago. Most of my professional career was in adult education, both classroom and administration including State Education Director for the Nevada Department of Corrections. Upon retiring from state employment, my husband and I moved to our vacation home in Key West. I needed something to do, so I started working part time for HTA as a docent at the Truman Little White House. That was six years ago and it turned out to be a fulltime career with the company. I transferred to the Old Town Trolley last year and very much enjoy working with the team here.

Q | What do you consider your greatest achievement?
A | My greatest achievement was raising 3 remarkable sons.

Q | What is your favorite vacation spot?
A | My favorite vacations are camping in the Rocky Mountains with my grandchildren.

Q | If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what would it be?
A | I would want to be a dog in my household. Those guys have a life of luxury.

Q | Which historical figure do you identify with?
A | I most admire Eleanor Roosevelt. She did what she believed to be right and championed unpopular causes in her time. She also became her own person in spite of her famous husband.

Q | What is your greatest fear?
A | I greatly fear becoming mobility challenged. I try to pursue a healthy lifestyle and keep active.

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**Marta Wolney**
Administrative Assistant; Key West

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**BACKGROUND**
I am from just outside of Boston, Massachusetts. For 30 years I taught school and owned a nursery school and day care center. After 28 years, I sold the school and those little kids bought me a home in Key West. I also had a psychotherapy practice, working with addicted mothers with young children.

My first visit to Key West, some 26 years ago, I was hooked. “Keys Disease” as they call it. Although we bought a house in Key West, it took 9/11 to make us retire to the Island.

I have had many jobs with HTA from Bone Island Shuttle driver to ops manager of Bone Island Shuttle, head ticket seller of Conch Tour Train to ticket seller train/trolley. I have enjoyed every position with the company.

In 2002, my wife Judy and I moved to Key West with our dog, cats and bird. I love the island lifestyle. When I am asked, “Don’t you miss the seasons of New England?” my response is always NO, summer was my favorite season.

Q | What is your greatest fear?
A | Becoming a bag lady

Q | What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
A | I am a procrastinator. I always get the job done, but sometimes I do put it off, to the last second.

Q | If there was one place you would like to live besides your current city, where would it be?
A | I would probably go back to Boston, only if they promise no snow.

Q | What three things will you always find in my refrigerator?
A | “Butta”, Arizona blueberry green tea and ½ and ½ for my coffee.

Q | If you could choose one reality TV show to be on, what would it be?
A | My wife Judy and I would love to be on the “Amazing Race”. It would be wonderful seeing all the exotic places in person, not from the couch.

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**Joyce Dahlberg**
Sales Representative; Key West

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**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**

**FEBRUARY**
William Webster, 22 years
Timothy Watson, 8 years
Kevin Delahanty, 7 years
Karen Mott, 3 years

**MARCH**
Richard Ware, 13 years
David Galvan, 1 year

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**twitter.com/keywesttours**
**facebook.com/keywesttours**
25 February - March 2015

Happy Spring
by Eva Conway; Operations Manager

I can’t believe it is March already and our temperatures are in the 80’s. This is way too soon. In February it actually dropped to 48 degrees. The record low is 41 degrees. We were all freezing and wore many layers. I know the Northerners wish they had this problem.

Our season in Key West is going to be winding down. March is our biggest month of the year. Cruise ships are a big part of our business. We have 48 cruise ships in March. In April it will drop down to 34 cruise ships. In May it will drop to 12 cruise ships.

We had a request for a train to go to Sunset Key for a wedding. The only problem is the only way to get to Sunset Key is by boat. The train has to be taken apart and shipped over by barge. That is not as easy as it sounds. The train has to back onto the barge which goes down at an angle. The lower part is near the captain and then it gets higher on the other end. Jay Knotsmen was our mechanic that backed it onto the barge and drove it back out when it got there. He stayed on Sunset Key until the event was over. The tour guide was Lars Van Norden and he transported passengers to the wedding from the homes there. In the 90’s we took the train for the first time to Sunset Key for Oprah Winfrey’s Birthday Party.

Kudos to the tour guides for getting thru this season with all the detours they have had on tour. Key West is a 2 mile wide by 4 mile long island. At least one block of the main streets are closed. They have been doing road work on the major streets in old town so it will not flood in heavy rain. That can be very challenging as well. Have a great Spring everyone!

Cruise Ship World
by Kevin Delahanty; Excursion Liaison

Here we are in February going into March. Cruise ship traffic is heavy, 42 in February and 50 in March. We are working on new tours as mentioned before. We are continually training with Cruise ship staff. We are trying to promote all Historic Tours products. We would like to sell all products Pier side in combination with the Train and Trolley. Upgrades are an afterthought for most, being aware may kick that thought into gear. If not Pier side then when they see attractions and knowing of upgrade may prompt to buy. We are ready to introduce a new tour. It is a Cigar and Rum tour. Guests visit a Cigar factory and see one of Key West’s oldest business, then visit the Rum Distillery to taste various rums manufactured here in the Keys.

Happy Anniversary

FEBRUARY
Warren Patick, 15 years
Roberto Alvarenga, 14 years
Eric Dehn, 10 years
Shirley Porter, 4 years
Kenneth Jones, 3 years
Daniel Marvin, 3 years
Danielle Stracquadaine, 1 year

MARCH
Erika Mullen, 1 year

Rudy

Proud Owner Marta Wolney; Old Town Trolley Administrative Assistant

Rudy is a 12 year old Italian Greyhound. He was rescued from Reno, Nevada nine years ago and has been my constant companion ever since. He much prefers the tropical climate here. Rudy is very affectionate and loves other dogs as well as anybody who will pet him or give him a treat. When not lying in the sun, Rudy will likely be curled up in his favorite blanket.
St. Augustine Breaks Ground on New Welcome Center

by David Chatterton; General Manager

It was announced at our March 4th CASTmember meeting that a new Transportation/Welcome Center is being built on US 1 in St. Augustine. When it’s completed, there will be close to 100 parking spaces. We have purchased a new van that will be a dedicated shuttle van. We will employ a shuttle driver whose sole responsibility will be to shuttle guests to Old Town St. Augustine from the Transportation Center. We chose the Old Cracker design for the new building in keeping with the Old Florida look. We wanted to make sure the building stands out and becomes easily recognizable. There will also be plenty of green space and we are partnering with a local farmer’s market who will sell fresh fruits and vegetables on the property. Inside will be quite a contrast from the outside. There will be state of the art, touch-screen technology. There will be a kitchen inside and there is a meeting place that will be created for associations in town to meet. This will provide us an opportunity as host to say a few words before their meetings. We are excited about our newest addition to St. Augustine.

Pam Reed
Finalist in the 2015 Rose Awards

Our very own Pam Reed was a finalist at the 2015 Rose Awards! The Rose Awards recognize NE Florida’s front line hospitality employees who demonstrate excellent customer service. We nominated Pam because she ‘IS’ Hospitality. She always provides our guests with extraordinary customer service and always has a warm friendly smile. OTT St. Augustine secured a table of 10 so that the leadagement team could attend and cheer her on! Congratulations to Pam for being a finalist in a field with so many nominees.

Sign Shop Remodel

The Sign Shop, recently underwent a remodel. It has added some wonderful new merchandise in addition to the signs they continue to sell. Whether you are looking for beach chic, nautical knick knacks or want to bring home some Southern Hospitality with a pineapple sign for your door, they have what you’re looking for in a souvenir. We are already receiving great reviews from our guests at the new merchandise.
Second Annual Light Up the Night Awards

We finally wrapped up our Nights of Lights on January 31st and with the closing of the Nights of Lights, we have our final winners in the 2nd Annual Light up the Night contest we held for area businesses. This is the only contest held in St. Augustine recognizing the wonderful light displays. We had our guests vote by texting and we also included a panel of judges from the Jacksonville SKAL who voted for the best Light Display. And the winners are:

1. Casablanca Inn
2. Meehan’s Irish Pub
3. Cedar House Inn

Congratulations to all the winners! Each winner received a cash award along with an advertising package from MINT magazine.

CASTMEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Fred Harris
Facilities Manager, St. Augustine

BACKGROUND

I was born in St. Augustine, FL where I have lived my entire life with the exception of my college years. I grew up doing numerous jobs including working for my family’s retail business in downtown St. Augustine. In my early 20’s I had the pleasure of reconnecting with my wife, who I had been friends with since the age of 13. We have two spectacular children who are my inspiration for everything I do. After college, I opened my own restaurant, which was a fantastic experience as cooking has always been a love of mine. After I closed my restaurant, I took a few months off to remodel a home that I purchased.

Then, I came to work for Old Town Trolley Tours of St. Augustine, where I have worked in the facilities department for two and a half years. For the last year or so I have been the manager of the facilities department, which has been a truly wonderful experience. I have the pleasure to work with 150 wonderful people that take pride in the job they do so that our guests can make the best possible memories while they visit our lovely city. It has been my pleasure to continue to call Old Town Trolley Tours of St. Augustine my home away from home.

Q | 1. Who is the greatest love of your life?
A | My darling wife and children

Q | 2. If you were to die and come back as a person, who do you think it would be?
A | A wizard, because who wouldn’t want to be a wizard?

Q | 3. What three things will you always find in your refrigerator?
A | Yogurt, cheese, hot sauce

Q | 4. Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
A | Tony Stark

Q | 5. If you could choose one reality TV show to be on, what would it be?
A | The Real Housewives of Orange County
Cover Story: The American Bombshells

Bartenders for the evening: Jesse Panrock, Julie Panrock, Clinton Curry, and Justyna Janicka.

Crowds gathering for the evening:

Jenn and Stephanie

Jason and Bob Wolz

Clinton Curry helped bartend

Fred Varela, Tim Atwell and Michael Anderson helped cook up the burgers

Clifton Truman Daniel makes a surprise phone call to the Bombshells

Stephanie Leone performs a solo

Little White House employees: Yvette Wolff and Anne Trogner
I am originally from Avon Park, Florida, which is just south of Disney World. In 2007, I moved to St. Augustine, Florida to begin my studies at Flagler College. In college, I was a part of Flagler College's cheerleading team, coached at St. Joseph's Academy, and participated in several study abroad trips. After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history, I went on to pursue a Master of Arts degree in American Studies at the University of Alabama. ROLL TIDE! After finishing my master's degree, I felt compelled to come back to the ancient city and began a career in historical tourism. Traveling, experiencing new cultures, and soaking in history are some of my passions, so Old Town Trolley is a perfect fit!

**Q | What three things will you always find in my refrigerator?**

**A | Three things that you can always find in my refrigerator are cashew butter, whey protein powder, and milk. I cannot live without daily protein shakes.**

**Q | If there were one place you would like to live besides your current city, where would it be?**

**A | If I could live in any other city besides St. Augustine, Florida, it would be Barcelona, Spain. The architecture, food, and history are awe-inspiring and are reminiscent of St. Augustine.**

**Q | If you could choose one reality TV show to be on, what would it be?**

**A | My love of traveling and experiencing new cultures would make me want to be on the Amazing Race. The high-intensity, fast-paced, and challenging tasks would give you an in-depth look into the cultures of each country you are visiting.**

**Q | What is your favorite vacation spot?**

**A | My favorite vacation spot would be Da Nang, Vietnam. I traveled to Vietnam two years ago in a study abroad group and I fell in love with the country.**

**Q | Who are your favorite writers?**

**A | My favorite writer is Edgar Allen Poe. The Raven captured my imagination at a young age and since then I have read the majority of his work.**
On March 26, 2015 a new Historical Marker was unveiled in St. Augustine. This dedication of the Oldest Drug Store was a big success. Somehow we managed a brief pause in the rain that literally began one hour before the event and restarting minutes after our last guest said their goodbyes.

We had an impressive guest list which included our City Manager, Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Commissioner, Chamber President and Director of Communications from our Visitor and Convention Bureau. Media in attendance included the St. Augustine Record, Historic City News, The St. Augustine Report, Oldcity.com, Augustine.com, Old City Life Magazine, Big Fat Coupon Book and Mint Magazine.

Special thank you to both Dana St Claire and Ed Swift IV who both spoke sincerely and convincingly on Historic Tours of America’s mission to both preserve and interpret St. Augustine’s history and to the local press for getting the word out. Also, a big thank you to the Raintree Restaurant on an amazing presentation of both food and drink served at the reception which followed immediately after the dedication.

St. Augustine Vice Mayor Roxanne Horvath, left, and Mayor Nancy Shaver talk with Historic Tours of America Chief Operating Officer Ed Swift IV after an unveiling of a historic marker in front of the Old Drug Store on Orange Street in St. Augustine on Thursday, March 26, 2015. HTA recently bought the historic property that now houses their Potter’s Wax Museum.

Dell Lunsford
Payroll Manager; Human Resources

Hello everyone, some of you know me, some of you may have heard of me and some of you have no idea who I am. Well, I am the Payroll Manager working in lovely Key West and I have been with Historic Tours of America, Inc. for a little over eleven years now.

I grew up in Northern Virginia and always had a fascination with the state of Florida since my first trip to Disney World in December 1971. I knew someday I would live in Florida but didn’t know it would be Key West until I vacationed here in January 2003. When my vacation ended I arrived back in Virginia to two feet of snow and started making my moving plans even before shoveling the sidewalk and driveway. I moved two months later and haven’t looked back.

Now I’ve bought my first home which I share with Donald my partner of 7 years, his son Alex, and our three cats Miss Piggy (she snorts when she purrs), Tinky, and Jet. Life couldn’t be better!

Q | What is your idea of perfect happiness?
A | Two feet in the sand instead of the snow, my partner by my side, palm trees overhead, a margarita in one hand and a great book in the other hand.

Q | What is your greatest fear?
A | Snakes! Absolutely terrified of them, I saw one cross the sidewalk in front of the office and refused to use that entrance for the next 6 months just in case it was hanging around in the bushes.

Q | Which talent would you most like to have?
A | Well I don’t know if you would really call it a talent, but I would love to learn to speak multiple languages. I have always imagined travelling the world and being able to speak the language of the country that I’m visiting.

Q | If you could choose one reality TV show to be on, what would it be?
A | The Amazing Race. Being able to speak multiple languages would really come in handy for this one.

Q | What do you consider your greatest achievement?
A | Making it past the age of 21! I was one wild child!
Looking to lower your blood pressure? Then lace up your sneakers and get a move on. Exercise is a tried and true way to lower blood pressure, lose weight and relieve stress.

Get a move on

Here are some useful tips for starting your workout routine:

1. **Know your limits.** If you’re just starting out, don’t try to run a marathon. Start by walking for 15 minutes a day. Then, slowly add 10 minutes to your routine. Aim for about 30 minutes of exercise each day. Think you can handle more? Studies show that exercising for 60 minutes a day can have an even better effect on your health. And you don’t have to carve out time to do all this exercise at once. You can break it up into two 30-minute sessions, or even three 20-minute sessions.

2. **Stick with what you like.** It may sound obvious, but it’s true: if you pick an activity you like, you’re more likely to stick with it. Maybe it’s biking. Or dancing with your kids in the living room. Or even mowing the lawn. Anything counts as long as it gets your heart rate up for an extended period of time. Not sure where to start? Try walking. It’s easy. It’s free. And it’s low impact on your joints. Plus, it’s a fun activity to do with a friend or family member.

3. **Step it up.** Once you’re comfortable with your routine, increase the intensity. Here’s a quick guide to help you figure out what intensity level is right for you:

   **Remember:** Always check with your doctor before you start any new exercise routine....

   That’s the number of steps you should aim to take every day. It adds up to about five miles. That may sound like a lot, but most people take 3,000 steps a day just going about their regular routines. Try using a pedometer to help you keep track.