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TIAK TIMES

THANK YOU . . . AND GOOD NIGHT

By Kevin Fern, 2015 TIAK President

Well, as I close out my year as your President, I simply want to say *thank you* to the entire membership for giving me the honor and the privilege of serving you. As I shared with the full board at the meeting earlier in the month, I was raised to believe that in whatever job or responsibility you may take on in life, always do it with the goal to leave things just a little better than you found them. For if you accomplish that objective, you will always be able to move on with your head held high. Today, I would like to think that just maybe we are a little better off than we were a year ago.

I am grateful to many for helping me make it that way. To our great professional staff—Amy, Marlee and Natalie—*thank you* for all of the hard work you did for me throughout the year and for a job well-done. To the Executive Committee—Suzan, Bridgette, LeAnn, Jan and Karen—*thank you* for your commitment to building a stronger and sounder organization. To the entire board, *thank you* for investing your time and energy in making this organization the voice of tourism in Kansas.

My parents also taught me to appreciate that the most important part of any journey in one’s life is the people you meet and the friends you make along the way. On this journey for me, the friends have been true and certainly the memories have been rich. As I pass on the gavel to Suzan, I know we are in good hands as she has the ability and foresight to provide outstanding leadership for our organization.

My very best wishes to all of you for a festive holiday season with your family and friends, and may the New Year bring you both peace and prosperity. Again, *thank you*, my friends. ■



TIAK’s 2015 President, Kevin Fern, with TIAK’s 2016 President, Suzan Barnes

THANK YOU, KEVIN !



**Travel Industry
Association of Kansas**

DAY ON THE HILL

FEBRUARY 10, 2016



HIGHLIGHTS:

9:30 am Check-in, brunch, networking (Ramada Inn)

10 am Welcome to Tourism presentation (Ramada Inn)

11 am Statehouse Office visits & lunch on your own

2 pm Popcorn break at the Statehouse for Legislators

5:30 pm TIAK Legislative Reception (Ramada Inn)

For a detailed agenda, please visit the TIAK website

Join the Travel Industry Association of Kansas as we celebrate the Power of Travel Kansas and speak to our Kansas legislators with a unified voice. Help us advocate for the travel industry in the state of Kansas.

Please consider sponsoring this important event. For more information on sponsorship levels, contact Amy Billquist at BillquistA@gmail.com.

Sponsorship Levels:

Event sponsor \$600

Day on the Hill sponsor \$300

Legislative Evening sponsor \$400

Attendee Levels:

Day on the Hill attendee \$35

Legislative Reception attendee \$50

www.tiak.org/events/day-on-the-hill

TIAK DAY ON THE HILL SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

BECOME A SPONSOR

Sponsorship rates are as follows:

All sponsorships include recognition in the TIAK Times newsletter.

In addition, benefits also include:

Event Sponsor (\$600)

- Two admissions to the day events
- Admittance for up to 5 attendees at evening event
- Logo placement on various event materials, including materials provided to elected officials
- Logo signage at the evening event and on all event promo materials
- Community banner displayed at evening event

Day on the Hill Sponsor (\$300)

- Two admissions to the day events
- Logo placement on various event materials, including materials provided to elected officials

Legislative Evening Sponsor (\$400)

- Admittance for up to 5 attendees at evening event
- Recognition of sponsorship in invitation to elected officials
- Logo on signage on evening event promo materials
- Community banner displayed during event

Single attendee rates are as follows:

Day on the Hill Attendee Level (\$35)

- Entrance to networking and luncheon
- Participation in Day on the Hill events

Legislative Reception Evening Attendee Level (\$50)

- Admittance to evening legislative reception

Either way, just plan to
Join Us!

TIAK DAY ON THE HILL LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION

In case you hadn't heard, TIAK's Day on the Hill is scheduled for February 10, 2016. We will again be hosting an evening event for our legislators at the Ramada Convention Center in Topeka.

At the evening event, each of our tourism regions will showcase how they promote their unique attractions in a fun, relaxed tradeshow environment. Each regional display is coordinated by your region's liaison to the TIAK Board. If you would like to join in your region's display, please contact your regional coordinator. We would love to have as many communities involved as we can.

Our goal for the evening is to educate our state officials on all of the ways we market our great tourism attractions. We have had positive feedback on the event from our legislators in the last two years, so we hope to have good participation in this unique event to help showcase our great industry to our elected officials. If you have questions, please also feel free to contact Natalie Bright at natalie@brightcarpenter.com, or Jan Stevens (jans@dodgecity.org) or Donna Price (cvb@goodlandnet.com), evening event co-chairs. ■



YOUR 2016 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS



From left to right:

Kevin Fern, Past President (Visit Shawnee)
 BJ Harris, Treasurer (Crawford County CVB)
 Jan Stevens, Secretary (Dodge City CVB)
 LeAnn Cox, Vice President (Hutchinson CVB)
 Bridgette Jobe, President-Elect (Kansas City, KS CVB)
 Suzan Barnes, President (Grand Central Hotel)

New Board Members for 2016:

Stacy Barnes, Greensburg Tourism (2nd Term)
 Jennifer Cook, El Dorado CVB (2nd Term)
 Kelly Peetoom, Olathe CVB
 Brett Oetting, Visit Topeka
 Rick Rekoske, Hays CVB

LEAVENWORTH CVB SEEKING MANAGER



The City of Leavenworth is seeking experienced candidates to successfully organize and oversee convention & tourism activities and event planning. This position will develop and implement a sales marketing plan and strategies to promote the destination to convention business. Incumbent will perform a variety of routine and complex administrative, technical and professional work in the preparation and implementation of public information tools, programs and services.

Minimum qualifications include BA/BS in related field and three years' experience in travel or hospitality and tourism marketing management; or combination of education/experience, must possess a valid state driver's license, and at least three years administrative and public relations experience. Starting salary is \$52,702 DOQ plus a competitive benefit package. Interested applicants may apply in confidence by sending a cover letter and resumé to HR Department, 100 N. 5th Street, Leavenworth KS 66048. Deadline for submission of applications is December 31, 2015. For a detailed position description, please visit the City's website at www.lvks.org. EOE/AA ■

Be sure to check out all of the employment opportunities on the TIAK website at:

<https://tiak.org/resources/jobs-and-internships/>.

SPREAD SOME SCHOLARSHIP CHEER

Happy Holidays—spread the holiday cheer by donating to the TIAK Scholarship Fund! Now is the time to extend your holiday gift list to include a donation toward the 2016 TIAK Scholarship Fund. As of today, we have about \$80 banked to bring a deserving college student to the 2016 Tourism Conference in Olathe, but we need your help to cover the remaining \$520 needed. Spread the holiday cheer and click [here](#) to donate today! Happy holidays from the TIAK Education Committee! ■

TIAK LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



- Continue to work with policy makers to identify long-term, sustainable funding for the promotion of tourism at the state level, such as defined in the Kansas Tourism Initiative.
- Support consistent, sufficient funding for the Division of Travel and Tourism so that they may continue to promote and advance tourism economic development throughout Kansas. Advocate that Travel and Tourism dollars remain dedicated to direct tourism projects and not diverted to other efforts within Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. Seek tourism investment levels that keep Kansas competitive with surrounding states.
- Advocate for tax measures which generate revenue through investment in projects or initiatives that produce jobs and/or encourage visitor spending.
- Continue to support the development of natural heritage areas of state and national significance as well as continue support of National Heritage Area initiatives.
- Monitor issues related to transportation and support levels of funding necessary to complete projects designated in T-Works, the current comprehensive transportation plan.
- Monitor activity related to the Transient Guest Tax to ensure the dollars collected are used for the primary source of promoting travel and tourism. Maintain awareness of tax issues that may affect Destination Marketing Organizations. Oppose efforts to lessen the impact of convention and tourism promotion through the use of the Transient Guest Tax. Work with legislative committees and Kansas Department of Revenue to review Transient Guest Tax statutes for uniformity and enforcement.
- Monitor legislation on Open Records/Open Meetings Act and oppose legislation which weakens current Open Records/Open Meetings statutes.
- Advocate for a healthy business environment that encourages small business and entrepreneurial ventures related to tourism in Kansas. Monitor regulatory oversight so that it encourages the delivery of a successful tourist experience in Kansas.
- Monitor implementation of new workers compensation statutes and oppose efforts which would have a negative impact on service industry businesses.
- Monitor state and federal legislation with regard to immigration and naturalization that impacts the service industry business.
- Oppose broad-based reporting requirements for entities receiving state funding, which would put tourism professionals at competitive disadvantages with other competitive destinations.
- Advocate for policies which promote the growth and development of a strong Agritourism business sector in Kansas.
- Oppose limitation or prohibition of public lobbying. ■



Please take a few minutes to complete [this survey](#) to share your concerns or issues in order to help us better prepare for the 2016 Legislative Agenda. Please respond by close of business January 7, 2016.

PRE-SESSION ARTICLE

This year's Legislative Session begins on January 11th and is expected to be significantly shorter and less controversial than last year's. The major issues for 2016 will again be budget shortfalls, taxes and education. The budget for FY 2017 passed last session with more than \$200 million in new spending, but adjustments are needed to account for lower than anticipated revenue. Legislative leaders have stated no new taxes will be considered during the 2016 Session to help fill the budget hole, and instead, additional budget cuts will be considered. In December, Linda Craghead, Asst. Secretary for KDWPT, updated the TIAK Board that the Division of Budget recommended a \$500,000 reduction in EDIF funding received for the state tourism budget. Craghead stated there has been an appeal regarding the proposed cut, but no final decision has been made. Craghead committed that if the Division does sustain the proposed cut, the money will not be taken from marketing but absorbed in other areas. TIAK leadership and staff are in communication with KDWPT and will let you know once a final decision has been made.



In addition, education may take center stage if a pending Kansas Supreme Court decision is released and requires significantly more revenue to be allocated to K-12 education. Many legislators would like to pass a new K-12 funding formula, however, that is unlikely to pass this session because 2016 is an election year for both the House and the Senate. Instead, election year politics will take center stage as candidates vie for their legislative seats and such controversial votes are unlikely to happen. Expect votes on issues that candidates can use for their campaigns—either for or against. Issues such as religious liberties and immigration reform can be expected as well as further discussion on the property tax lid passed last session. But be assured, TIAK staff will be keeping a close watch on issues impacting the tourism industry and our members. Expect to begin receiving our weekly statehouse updates the first week of session. Until then, don't forget to reach out to your area legislators and let them know you are a resource for them during the legislative session. ■

TAX COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION RE-CAP

Committee

A special Committee on Taxes was assigned to review all tax credit, sales tax exemptions and sales tax on services during the fall. The issue of tax exemptions came up during tax debate during the final hours of the 2015 Legislative Session. An agreement was reached between House and Senate negotiators to have an interim committee review this issue. The Special Committee met for three days, hearing presentations and testimony and then discussing recommendations. The Special Committee can make recommendations to the 2016 Legislature and introduce a bill but cannot enact legislation on their own. After much discussion, the committee made the following recommendations:

- The House and Senate standing tax committees will set a sunset or schedule a sunset of all tax credits, sales tax exemptions or other tax policy that creates special treatment. This excludes value-added or constitutional exemptions.

(Continued on page 8)

POLITICAL PERSUASION

Fixing America's Surface Transportation ("FAST") Act

Congress recently passed, and the president signed, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation ("FAST") Act, which reauthorizes the federal highway and public transportation programs for fiscal years (FY) 2016-2020 and stabilize the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) during that five-year period. Rep. Lynn Jenkins, Senator Pat Roberts and Senator Jerry Moran voted for the bill, and Kansas is expected to get an annual average of \$400,293,169 for the fiscal years 2016-2020. Click [here](#) for an overview of the FAST Act and [here](#) for a Comprehensive Analysis, including a breakdown by state. ■

Congress Passes Visa Waiver Provisions

[Congress recently passed legislation](#) to fund the government through next September. Included in this legislation is language from Rep. Candice Miller's (R-MI) [H.R. 158](#), as passed by the House earlier this month, which provides sensible reforms to the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). These improvements will further enhance and strengthen the VWP and help bolster our national security. Our industry really came together to defend and protect the VWP and U.S. Travel appreciates your support. ■

KANSAS MUSEUMS NEED VISITORS

By *Beccy Tanner*, [The Wichita Eagle](#)



As the Kansas Aviation Museum (KAM) prepares to find its third director in less than a year, much of what the museum's board of directors will be looking for is that person's ability to raise money. "We have not yet outlined what we are looking for, but a big part of that is fundraising for the museum," said Richard Moore, president of the museum's board of directors and its interim director. "The board of directors is also a major component, and KAM is going to be concentrating on finding professional grant writers. We haven't been really aggressive searching for grant as we should be."

Funding for museums from local, state and federal sources continues to shrink while the competition for those dwindling funds continues to grow. As a result, the more than 300 museums in Kansas are looking for more creative ways to help fund their budgets. "The top two issues are lack of a steady and adequate budget, and the aging of the volunteers," [Marci Penner](#), director of the Kansas Sampler Foundation, said in an e-mail to *The Eagle* when asked about the biggest challenges museums face. Without enough volunteers, many museums in small towns are open only by appointment. And that means they become less of a tourism destination and revenue source.

Part of the problem in finding reliable funding is that local donors—those with the deep pockets—have disappeared through the decades. "The challenge that every arts organization is faced with is looking at their audience and mission and making sure that they try to change their model to be more relevant with the current market today," said John D'Angelo, director of Wichita's Arts and Culture Department.

Bob Workman, director of the Wichita State University Ulrich Museum of Art, said it is up to museum directors to have a broad base of skills. Whereas in the past they were often historians, they now must also possess leadership, business and financial skills. Ideally, a substantial portion of a museum's funding comes from a predictable endowment, Workman said, and at least 50 percent in earned income through fundraisers, admission fees and sales.

"There has been a paradigm shift in that when a lot of museums were

(Continued on page 10)

KANSAS SAMPLER FOUNDATION ENDS FESTIVAL

By Amy Bickel, [Kansas Agland](#)

It's not because of attendance or money that the Kansas Sampler Festival is ending. In fact, the past event was a record-setting success. The leader of the grassroots organization just says it is time for a change. "There is nothing mysterious," said Kansas Sampler Foundation Director [Marci Penner](#). "The festival was going strong. It was just a desire to make a change." Penner, along with Assistant Director [WenDee LaPlant](#) and the foundation board, are still considering the possibilities. After a 28-year run, the last festival will end after being hosted in 2016 and 2017 in Winfield.

The past festival, which was in Wamego, drew record attendance of about 12,000, Penner said. There were also 290 exhibitors, and they had to turn people away because of the limited space. "The festival is on an upswing; it is strong," Penner said. "We are coming at this decision from a point of strength—use the festival as a springboard into the next idea—to promote what to see and do in the state." She also stressed the festival has had good community support, as well as help from a strong volunteer crew.

Conversation about the next step will start this winter. Penner added ideas could include getting people out to Kansas locations rather than have them pick up a brochure at a booth. "The festival is doing great," she said. "But let's decide to make a change and see what that will look like. It might sound crazy, or we might



seem like we have a screw loose, but I believe in our network so much that I believe we can come up with a more active way to get people to see what we have to do in this state."

In 1990, the late Mil Penner and daughter Marci had the first "festival" —a book-signing party on the family farm near

Inman. About 30 places included in the new Kansas Weekend Guide came to promote under one tent. "It snowed, it sleeted, we didn't know what we were doing," said Penner. "But a thousand people came to the farm that day. We thought, 'Wow, maybe this is telling us something. People are interested, and they want to know what there is to see and do in the state.'" The next year, they named it the Kansas Sampler Festival. It was held at the farm for eight consecutive years.

The alfalfa field the family used for parking was rotated to another crop, which is why the festival first underwent change in the late 1990s—moving every two years from town to town. However, the change was for the better, Penner said.

The festival went on the road in 1998 as host communities were chosen for a two-year stint through a rigorous application process. Communities included Pratt, Ottawa, Independence, Newton, Garden City, Concordia, Leavenworth, Liberal and Wamego. As it moved to other cities, other regions of the state were introduced to what there is to see and do in Kansas. ■

TAX COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION RE-CAP (CONT.)

(Continued from page 6)

- The committee will create standards for new exemptions.
- The committee will develop a process and measurable goals for the credits and/or exemptions.

There was no discussion about the transient guest tax and its expansion and use on a statewide level. We will keep you updated as the session begins and tax credits and exemptions are again reviewed. ■

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN



Destination Capitol Hill is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for you to learn about upcoming legislation that impacts travel, network with industry colleagues and meet with Mem-

bers of Congress to stress the importance of travel as an economic driver. And registration is now open!

Join us—and hundreds of your colleagues from around the country—at The Mayflower Hotel, from March 16-17, 2016. U.S. Travel will provide you with everything needed to go into your meetings with confidence. We'll host educational webinars prior to the event, coordinate your meetings and provide a personalized schedule. ■

PAULS TO CHAIR HOUSE FED & STATE

State Rep. Janice Pauls, R-Hutchinson, has been named the new Chair of the House Federal and State Affairs Committee by House Speaker Ray Merrick, R-Stilwell, to replace Rep. Steve Brunk, R-Wichita, who resigned his House seat.

Merrick also named Rep. James Todd, R-Overland Park, to replace former Rep. Travis Couture-Lovelady, R-Palco, as vice chair of Fed & State. Couture-Lovelady resigned from the House in November. ■



NEW STATE FAIR BOARD GENERAL MANAGER



The Kansas State Fair Board announced in November that Susan Sankey has been named general manager of the Kansas State Fair. Sankey brings extensive experience in nonprofit leadership and the animal agriculture industry to the position where she will succeed Denny Stoecklein who resigned earlier this year.

During the 2014 and 2015 fair seasons, Sankey served as the Director of Competitive Exhibits for the Kansas State Fair. As general manager, Sankey will lead all activities related to the Kansas State Fair and non-fair events held on the 280-acre fairgrounds. She will also represent the fair, a standalone state agency, at public and agriculture industry organizations as well as at government agencies and the state legislature. ■

WHITE PAPERS



There's a new addition to the Resources Section of the TIAK website: White Papers.

Our Education Committee has researched and collected white papers on various topics. Current White Paper listings include:

- The State of the American Traveler
- EppersonDest Product Development: A Review and Analysis of the Role of CVBs in Destination Product Development
- Destination Brand Building
- Five Destination Branding Principles to Boost Economic Recovery
- Toll Advocacy: It's Not Just For a Crisis
- Amadeus: Shaping the Future of Travel—Macro trends driving industry growth over the next decade

All of these white papers can be found on the TIAK website at: www.tiak.org/resources/white-papers-reports. Be sure to check them out!

KANSAS MUSEUMS NEED VISITORS (CONT.)

(Continued from page 7)

founded, their job was to preserve and collect objects and tell the story of their community,” said [Lisa Dodson](#), executive director of the Kansas Museums Association. “As funding has declined from all government levels, the directors or management has had to be more creative in more earned revenue streams—such as creating a museum store, rental space and activities that grow donors.”

Museums are no longer a guaranteed experience for each generation. “I grew up as a baby boomer where we all went to museums when we were schoolchildren and developed an affinity for history, art or culture that we carried with us,” Dodson said. “We supported museums because we thought that was the right thing to do. Younger generations want to know what your impact is, what kind of public service do we provide. Museums can no longer just be places to go look at artifacts but be able to have educational programs and meet special needs. The museums are working closely with schools that no longer have travel budgets and taking programming to the schools. Museums have to be proactive now.”

As funding shrinks, some museums are consolidating resources and collections. Struggles for freedom—by American Indians, black Americans and women—have dominated Kansas history. Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area encompasses nearly 30 counties in eastern Kansas and a dozen more in Missouri. The region has joined forces to market and promote the museums.

Rather than constructing a building, organizers have increased signs at historic sites featured in the area. Visitors can learn about James Lane, a Kansas senator who helped set up the Underground railroad leading many slaves to freedom. And about the 1856 Battle of Black Jack, near Lawrence, which many historians believe was the first battle of the Civil War.

Beyond Bleeding Kansas and the Civil War, the heritage area can also tell stories of the Mexican War and the Mormon War—and even *Brown v. Board of Education*, the landmark Supreme Court case that helped end segregation in schools.

Funding also helps museums stay relevant by allowing them to improve their technology and hold events to attract new audiences. Museum technology used to mean having recordings for rent that visitors could carry with them as they explored exhibits. That went out with shoulder pads and poofy hair. “Some museums won’t continue to exist in the same form; we’ll see consolidations and museums re-inventing themselves,” Dodson said. “Some small history museums will be kept alive by their genealogy programs. They hold all the records, and they are a current trend.” ■

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
(CLICK ON EACH LINK FOR
MORE INFORMATION):

January 11, 2016

First Day of the 2016
Legislative Session

January 12, 2016 (5:30pm)

Governor Brownback’s
State of the State Address

January 14, 2016

TIAK EC Meeting

January 29, 2016

Kansas Day

February 10, 2016

[TIAK Day on the Hill](#)
State Capital, Topeka, Kan.

February 26, 2016

Turn Around Day in the
Kansas Legislature

March 16-17, 2016

[Destination: Capitol Hill](#)
Washington, D.C.

April 1, 2016

Last Day of 2016 Session

April 27, 2016

Veto Session begins

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