



MEMO

Date: June 21, 2013

To: Nevada County Economic Resource Council - Tourism Advisory Committee

From: Lani Lott and Cheri Sprenger, ERC Tourism Marketing Managers

Subject: Benchmarks/Outcomes - November 1, 2012 - June 21, 2013

Defining Visuals and Consistent Message

- Defined Nevada County, California as part of message.
- Identified a series of photographs to be used as visuals and the following words to be used in media to describe County's visitor assets or amenities:
 - Outdoor Recreation
 - Historic Towns
 - Award Winning Wineries
 - Fairs and Festivals
 - Unique Shopping & Dining
 - Art, Music & Theatre
- Completed past media message document that compiled the messages about Nevada County, California that have been used in the various print and on-line marketing materials over the last year and forwarded to Advisory Committee Chair to distribute to Committee members accordingly.

GoNevadaCounty.com

- Tourism Advisory Committee held session to review and provide recommendations for improvements to site.
- Chair prepared matrix of suggested changes/improvements and conducted meeting with Pellines.
- Sent out an email to Tourism Advisory Committee members to review content on appropriate itinerary currently listed on GoNevadaCounty.com and forward any changes or new itinerary information to webmasters.
- Regular email correspondence throughout the seven months between Committee Chair, Managers and web masters to help keep GoNevadaCounty.com fresh and updated.

Communication/Outreach

- Outreach to the following Tourism stakeholder individuals/sectors:
 - Met with Jeff and Shannon Peline to discuss GoNevadaCounty.com and facebook.
 - Met with Susan George and Eric Sams to review Nevada County Regional Chambers of Commerce past efforts and trumba calendar.
 - Met with Mary Ann Van Meter, past Executive Director of the Grass Valley/Nevada County Chamber of Commerce.
 - Met with Robin Hauck and Wendy Oaks from Nevada County Fair.
 - Met with Cathy Whittleseely at Nevada City Chamber of Commerce.
 - Met with Craig Hoddy from Nevada County Gold Magazine.
 - Met with representatives from Sierra Heritage.
 - Met with Dave Schmall from Union.
 - Met with Ms. Lynn Saunders, President, CEO, Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce.
 - Met with Mr. Dan Holler, City Administrator, and City of Grass Valley.
 - Met with Ms. Gretchen Bond, Executive Director, Miners Foundry Cultural Center.
 - Met with representative from Boreal and Soda Springs ski area
 - Attended Nevada County Regional Chambers of Commerce meeting.
 - Conducted Focus Group Interviews with Lodging Sector.
 - Conducted Focus Group Interviews with Arts and Culture Sector.
 - Conducted interview with Bear Yuba Land Trust - Stacy Konner, Development Director and Laura Brown, Community Outreach.
 - Conducted Discussion Group with Wine Country Sector.
 - Email correspondence with Ms. Jet Lowe from YBONC Foundation regarding organization and upcoming event in June; Forwarded information to gonevadacounty.com.
 - Spoke with Ms. Courtney Ferguson from Empire State Historical Mine (lead from Sean) to discuss how we can collaborate to better promote the Mine.
 - Follow up phone conversation with Mr. Glen Foley of KVMR (“the voice of outreach”) regarding KVMR and promoting Nevada County.
 - Email exchange with Marilyn Bonnington Bourdet, Penn Valley Community Rodeo Association regarding upcoming Rodeo and encouraging her to forward information to GoNevadaCounty.com. Added her to Constant Contact database.
 - Met with Shaydar Edleman, Director of Operations from Boreal/Soda Springs/Woodward Tahoe.
 - Email correspondence between Miriam Limov, SYRCL’s River People Coordinator, Shannon Peline and Managers regarding how to best promote and market SYRCL’s upcoming 30th Anniversary Celebration.
- Drafted and distributed **three (3)** “internal” e-newsletters to tourism partner Constant Contact database.
 - First e-newsletter sent March 2013. Content included introduction of newsletter and objective, request for information regarding dog friendly activities or amenities to forward to Dog Trekker website, introduction of Northeast California Counties Film Commission, request for media contacts, reminder of sending information, content, events to gonevadacounty.com and Nevada County Tourism contact information. 84 sent; 41 open (51.3% rate);7 bounces (3 fixed; one vacation; 1 blocked; 2 non-existent); 26 clicks

- Second e-newsletter sent May 2013. Content included overview of March FAM Tour, summary of Western States Conference and Visitors Bureau Tech Summit held in April, link to article on best practices for on-line marketing, call for volunteers to work at the County Exhibit Booth during the State Fair, announcement of launching consumer e-newsletter in June, listing of accolades and press that Nevada County received and a “Tourism Tip of the Month”. 74 sent; 31 open (43.7% rate); 3 bounces (fixed 2; one blocked); 7 clicks.
- Third email blast was an informational piece sent June 2013 announcing that DogTrekker.com needed information from the Gold Country region regarding dog-friendly venues and attractions to feature in the July newsletter.
- Drafted and distributed first Nevada County Tourism **consumer** e-newsletter via Constant Contact database in June. Over 705 names and email addresses into consumer-based Constant Contact database. Content highlighted three June events including Truckee Thursdays, Nevada City Bicycle Classic and Father’s Day Bluegrass Festival, Empire Mine State Historic Park, Sierra Vintners, Hiking in Nevada County and Music in the Mountains Summerfest 2013. E-newsletter included links to all venues within content, GoNevadaCounty.com link, *Like us on Facebook* icon and *Join our Mailing List* icon.
- Strengthen collaboration with the new Greater Grass Valley Visitor Center resulting in two of the County based tourism venues - Sierra Vintners and the Nevada County Arts setting up displays within the new facility to market their venues.
- Prepared several talking points reflecting the importance of tourism to Nevada County and economic development in general.
- Prepared responses to County’s questions regarding the 2013/2014 Marketing Action Plan and forwarded to Robert Trent accordingly.
- Drafted and updated monthly Tourism Marketing budget.
- Prepared and participated in **six (6)** Tourism Advisory Committee meetings and provided follow up as requested.
- Prepared memo each month of work accomplished and forwarded to ERC.

Media Buys/Trade Shows

- **Media Buys to Date include:**
 - Full-page ad in Nevada County Gold Magazine.
 - Full-page ad in spring issue of Sierra Food, Wine, Art.
 - Continued participation as part of Gold Country Visitor’s Association in Dog Trekker.
 - Gentle Giant Monument/Draft Horse Classic shared ad with Sierra County.
 - 1/3 page square ad for Arts and Events Spring (April, May issue) of Sierra Heritage - Received a free pick up in the Sierra Events insert, which offers additional 35,000 copies.

- 3 month on-line banner ad with SacBee.com. Added banner to promote one upcoming July County event -- California WorldFest.
- Negotiated (at 50% of normal rate) and prepared graphic design for 3-inch ad in July/August VIA Magazine. **Ad included GoNevadaCounty.com listed on AAA.com/VIA info and reader service listing with leads emailed biweekly.** VIA is mailed bimonthly to 2.5 million AAA homes in N. CA/NV/UT. AAA members live in one out of every two N. CA homes. Readership exceeds 5 million each issue.
- Researched/Negotiated ad rates for co-op marketing opportunity with Sunset Magazine for April issue but decided not to place.
- Meet with owner of V-Tour to discuss program.
- **Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show - Santa Clara Convention Center (Feb 16/17)**
 - Coordinated swag giveaway, Nevada County Get-a-way package and booth display.
 - Completed artwork for display banner highlighting Nevada County, CA, GoNevadaCounty.com and county map.
 - Collected collateral from various sectors to hand out at Show (including a drive around to Wineries).
 - Set up booth on Friday, February 15 - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. and breakdown on Sunday, February 17 (4:00 to 5:00 p.m.).
 - Worked booth on Saturday, February 16 (9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.) and Sunday, February 17 (10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.).
 - Collected over 249 names from individuals that are interested in visiting our area and inputting names and emails into database to distribute to various tourism segments.
 - Gathered all gift certificates for Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show - Nevada County, CA Get-a-way prize and sent package with letter to winner - Ms. Susan Heimlich in Palo Alto.
- **Cheri attended Visit California 2013 Forum (February 20/21)**
 - 2 Day sessions including the Visit California Commissioners Board Meeting and Marketing Committee meeting
 - Updates on Brand USA and upcoming Visit California marketing message
 - Marketing Research on How Travelers plan trips and where they go for information - International and US
 - Information on co-op Marketing opportunities with Visit California
- **Attended California Travel Association's Summit - in San Diego (March 18 &19)**
 - 2 Day sessions including CalTravel Member Orientation; Vendor Marketplace; National Keynote Speakers, Breakout sessions and networking reception and luncheon.
 - Updates on legislation affecting Travel and Tourism
 - Keynotes and breakout sessions attended included:
 - Cirque Du Soleil, Vice President of Show Quality & Integrity
 - How the Rise of the Social Customer is Impacting Destinations in quite Unexpected Ways

- The Inspirational Future of California Tourism
 - Changing Demographics and Its Impact on Tourism
 - What's Driving U.S. & California Travel and What's Ahead
 - Effectively Communicating the Value of Travel and Tourism
 - Agritourism Panel
 - Creative Product Development Panel
 - Met with owners of Dog Trekker and discussed website and how to leverage
 - Met with creators of the NorCal Phone App and discussed challenges and possible options for GCVA to consider
 - Met with coordinator of Travel and Adventure shows to discuss comparisons of attendance at each show in 2013 (all shows showed increases in attendance numbers), value of participation at each show and discussed new show proposed in San Diego in 2014.
- **Lani attend 2013 Western Association of Convention & Visitors Bureau Tech Summit in Mesa, AZ (April 18 & 19)**
 - Two day of keynote and sessions. Topics included:
 - Social Media 201: Travel Trends and Tactics to Keep Your DMO Thriving
 - Mobile: What You Should Know
 - Integrating Content Marketing Into Your Existing Marketing Efforts
 - Industry Case Studies: Success in Relevant Digital Marketing Vehicles
 - Follow the Leader: How DMO's Can Lead Tourism Partners to Social Media Success
 - Social Media for Meetings and Meeting Planner-related Case Studies
 - Luncheon Keynote - Clever tools
 - The Consumer's Perception of Your DMO's e-Mail Marketing Program.
 - Attended Vendor Showcase - spoke with MobiManage about mobile web; spoke with Miles regarding our NorCal Guide Phone app
 - Attended a breakfast meeting of the Gold Country Visitors Association to meet with Susan Wilson, PR, regarding 2013/2014 services, focus areas and opportunities at upcoming POW-WOW.
- **State Fair County Exhibit**
 - Formed State Fair Booth sub committee to begin planning for 2013 Exhibit.
 - Completed application and forwarded to County for submittal to State Fair.
 - Conducted phone interview with Ms. Carol Buchanan, Exhibits Coordinator with State Fair to gain a better understanding of process.
 - Downloaded and read thoroughly the 2013 Counties Exhibits Competition Handbook.
 - Coordinated first meeting with Dianne Bennett, Professional Exhibit Builder (in attendance: Lynn, Tim, Eve, Sean, Lani and Cheri).
 - Identified target sponsors for Exhibit securing about \$5,000 in sponsorships.
 - Brainstormed various community agencies that may be interested in taking a day and volunteering to "man" the booth.
 - Brainstormed the various tourism sectors that need to be contacted to provide marketing collateral, pictures for use in display/collages and possible content.
 - Drafted and sent out email to over 20 Nevada County tourism and other non profit organizations about volunteer opportunities to "man" the Nevada County Exhibit at the California State Fair - July 12 - 28, 2013.

- Updated County Statement of Purpose.
 - Have **66** community volunteers signed up to work the two weeks of the State Fair.
 - On-going communication with professional booth builder.
 - Recruited Mr. Howard Levine to take over the coordination responsibility of County Exhibit.
 - Gathered examples of marketing collateral that will be distributed at booth during State Fair and mailed to State Fair officials for final approval.
 - Updated the volunteer orientation packets and informational binder.
 - Printed email sign up pads.
 - Reached out to tourism and economic development partners to gather information, posters, pictures, props to be used in the Exhibit to showcase the various amenities of our beautiful County.
- **NorCal Guide Phone App**
 - Received instructions, username and password for phone app as administrator. Updated Nevada County contact information and unincorporated County events. Forwarded username and password to Fair, Nevada City Chamber and Sierra Vintners as requested.

Gold Country Visitors Association

- Attended Association's November Board meeting held in Sutter Creek.
- As a representative for the Gold Country Visitors Association, Tourism Manager attended the Los Angeles Travel Show on January 15- 17.
- Attended the Association's January Board meeting held in Tuolumne County.
- Attended the Association's April Board meeting held in El Dorado.
- Cheri represented the County at the Association's marketing planning session held on Friday, May 10 in Auburn. The Association's marketing efforts for the next year will include: **Work to secure one significant FAM tour that the group can do together highlighting Gold Country and to take advantage of a higher membership level with Ca Travel. The group anticipates this will result in an increase in leads for the Gold County area partners. Group will also take along look at the GCVA website and make some determinations on direction at the July meeting.**
- Updated Nevada County's listings and events for the 2013 reprint of the Gold Country Visitor Association's brochure/map.

Media Leads and PR Opportunities

- Updated all content of existing Press Kit, consolidated folders and added Major Event's section. Made revisions as requested. Reviewed photos and identified additional photos needed. Forwarded Press Kit to be uploaded on GoNevadaCounty.com. Refreshed "What's New in Nevada County - June - August" for Digital Press Kit.
- Submitted Grass Valley Downtown Association's new event "Gold Rush Days" for Visit California's *What's New in California Spring* issue.
- Forwarded link to "Budget Travel - The top 10 Coolest Small Towns in America" to Cathy Whittlesey at Nevada City Chamber of Commerce for distribution to her members and email contacts.
- Collected and followed up with 20+ leads from tourism writers and agents at the Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show. Received an email from blogger from Ever In Transit that Gold Country communities were mentioned collectively in an article on the most intriguing places discovered at the travel show. <http://www.everintransit.com/finding-inspiration-at-the-bay-area-travel-and-adventure-show/>
- FAM Tour - San Francisco Tour Operators Guild (March 27-28).
 - Tourism Committee representation at planning meetings providing input on ideas to tie-in County assets.
 - Prepared 30 CD Rom's with Digital Press Kit and pictures for attendees.
 - Provided Nevada County, CA swag for attendees.
 - Various Tourism Advisory Committee members attended and represented County amenities including Sierra Vintners, Nevada County Arts, Nevada County Fairgrounds, and Outdoor Recreation.
- Successfully submitted four (4) different "Five Favorites" to VisitCalifornia.com <http://www.visitcalifornia.com/Fives/>
 - Five Favorite Springtime Activities in Nevada County
 - Five Unusual Historical Landmarks in Nevada County
 - Five Favorite Wine Tasting In Nevada County
 - Five Favorite Picnic Areas and Swimming Holes in Nevada County
- Lead through gonevadacounty.com - Gathered tourism marketing collateral and mailed package to travel agent located in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Prepared four, one-day itineraries with coordinating pictures as requested by Gold Country Visitors Association in preparation for Association's participation in upcoming International Pow Wow 2013 in Las Vegas. Itineraries included *Red Wine, Whitewater and Blue Jean Adventure Tour; Farm to Fork Culinary Adventure; Gold Rush Adventure Tour and The Gold Country Great Escape - Mountain Biking in Nevada County*. <http://www.ustravel.org/events/international-pow-wow>. U.S. Travel Association's IPW is the travel industry's premier international marketplace and the largest generator of travel to the U.S. - **it is NOT a typical trade show**. In just three days of intensive pre-scheduled business appointments, more than 1,000 U.S. travel organizations from every region of the USA (representing all industry category components), and close to 1,200 international and

domestic buyers from more than 70 countries, conduct business negotiations that result in the generation of more than \$3.5 billion in future Visit USA travel. At IPW, buyers and sellers are able to conduct business that would otherwise be generated only through an exhaustive number of around-the-world trips. **Forwarded sample itineraries to GoNevadaCounty.com to post on site.**

- Forwarded to Tourism Advisory Committee members an email and press release from DogTrekker regarding a study completed by Destination Analysts about the leisure travelers and their dog travel habits.
- Advisory Tourism Committee members, Lynn Wilson and Sean Gilleran attended the San Francisco Tour Operators Guild membership meeting in San Francisco on June 10 and gave a 20-minute presentation on Nevada County to about 100 Guild members. The invitation for Nevada County to present at the Guild's membership meeting was a direct result of the Regional Chambers of Commerce FAM Tour held in March. A PowerPoint presentation was prepared by Lynn Wilson, Chair of the Tourism Advisory Committee and shown at the meeting. In addition, attendees receive the 2013 Gold Magazine, the new Visitor Guide, the Sierra Vintners brochure and some material from the Holiday Inn. The following day, Sean met with supervisor of the San Francisco - California Welcome Center on Pier 39 and the Director of Visitor Experience San Francisco Travel Association. He left copies of the Press Kit and County presentation in PDF format on CD well as the same handouts that were handed out at the Guild membership meeting the evening before. Managers made follow up call with both agencies to explore how Nevada County materials could be included at both visitor centers. County highlighted the visit in the "County of Nevada Friday Memo" as well as linked the PowerPoint presentation on both MyNevadaCounty.com and GoNevadaCounty.com.
- Tracked press coverage or accolades received including:
 - NBC Bay Area blog - <http://www.nbcbayarea.com/blogs/worth-the-trip/The-Backcountry-Gems-of-Nevada-County-199954891.html>
 - 10 Small Towns on San Francisco Blog - <http://blog.sfgate.com/getlost/2013/03/25/10-small-town-escapes-worth-the-drive/#10801-7>
 - Boreal mentioned in Powdermag.com <http://www.powdermag.com/places/this-must-be-the-place-boreal/>
 - Fox40.com - On the Road, *Gold Rush Going Strong in Grass Valley, Nevada City* by Kimberly Rankin.
 - *It is Not Napa or Sonoma* by Ron Kapon, Travel Contributor (reprinted in about 10 different online venues.)
 - San Francisco Magazine, *Follow the Open Road - Test Driving Seven Epic Escapes*. One of the seven "Epic Escapes" is San Francisco to Truckee via Highway 20 with stops in Grass Valley and Nevada City. (Thank you to Roseanne Burke for forwarding this find). <http://www.modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/2217-miles-of-amazing>

Nevada County Tourism Marketing Plans

- Drafted December 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013 ERC Tourism Advertising and Marketing Plan, timeline and budget.