



# TRAVEL COUNCIL

## JANUARY 8, 2013 | HARBORSIDE EAST AGENDA

- I. Welcome ..... Linn Lesesne  
*Travel Council Chairperson*  
Charming Inns and Circa 1886 Restaurant
- II. Introduction to the Marketing Department..... Shannon Smith  
*Creative Director*
- III. 2012 Recap and 2013 Initiatives – with a Focus on Mobile Strategy ..... Chris Simpson  
*Digital Marketing Director*  
Blue Ion, LLC
- IV. Investor Relations Update..... Andy Rankin  
*Director of Investor Relations*
- V. Executive Director’s Report..... Helen Hill  
*Executive Director*
- VI. Raffle & Adjourn..... Linn Lesesne

**SPECIAL THANKS TO SNYDER – THE EVENT RENTAL CO.** for providing the catering and bar services. The Travel Council reception will be held inside this building until 6:00pm and following that will be a client appreciation party held by Snyder – The Event Rental Co. inside and outside.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

TRAVEL COUNCIL MEETING | FEBRUARY 12 | 4 - 6 PM  
MAGNOLIA PLANTATION & GARDENS

The Charleston Area Convention & Visitors Bureau unifies and leads the local travel industry in marketing the Charleston area as an individual, incentive and group destination to both the domestic and international markets.

## ABOUT THIS VENUE

## HARBORSIDE EAST



Located at the foot of the Ravenel Bridge, just minutes from historic downtown Charleston and its surrounding beaches, Harborside East is an elegant and unique setting that boasts breathtaking views of the Charleston Harbor while offering abundant waterfront entertaining opportunities.

The venue includes more than 10,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space perfect for weddings, cocktail receptions, private parties, showers or corporate events. Harborside East can accommodate up to 600 guests, however its versatile layout provides an equally ideal space for smaller, more intimate events, whether inside its elegantly decorated interior or on its outdoor patio overlooking the harbor and beautiful marshland. The property also features a 1,500 square foot commercial grade kitchen, as well as four different waterfront ceremony options. Harborside East is a space that will undoubtedly provide a sophisticated and memorable setting for that very important occasion.

*"Harborside East is a dream to work with! I have coordinated many events, and working with this venue was one of the best experiences to date. And the location is stunning — you can't find a better view & venue. I highly recommend Harborside East for your next event!"* – Sunny



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# TRAVEL COUNCIL

JANUARY 8, 2013  
HARBORSIDE  
EAST

*Thank You  
To Our Service  
Providers*

VENUE:  
HARBORSIDE  
EAST

FOOD & BEVERAGE:  
HAMBY CATERING  
COURTESY OF  
SNYDER - THE  
EVENT RENTAL CO.

AUDIO/VISUAL:  
PDA

PHOTOGRAPHY:  
ROBBIN KNIGHT  
DIGITAL  
PHOTOGRAPHY

## FEATURE: MARKETING

### 2012 RECAP AND 2013 INITIATIVES WITH A FOCUS ON MOBILE STRATEGY

The leading role of digital marketing in the travel category is irrefutable. Although the CACVB's websites and digital initiatives aren't the only tool a prospective visitor uses in making destination and planning decisions, they are highly likely to use at least one of them. Our strategy has expanded from having just one CACVB web portal in the mid 90's to a multitude of channels that drive visitors and planners to a variety of digital "hubs" that are used to expand our brand and direct bookings of vacation stays and events. These sites not only provide a direct link to our Travel Council investors and practical trip planning information, but they also tell the larger story of this destination that is multifaceted, offering a travel experience like no other.

For the past 11 years, the Charleston Area Convention & Visitors Bureau has partnered with Blue Ion to help execute our digital marketing strategies. Today's Travel Council meeting features Chris Simpson, Blue Ion's Digital Marketing Director, who will recap some of our online highlights of 2012 while tantalizing you with some new initiatives planned for 2013.

In addition to our main portal, [explorecharleston.com](http://explorecharleston.com) (aka [charlestoncvb.com](http://charlestoncvb.com)), the Bureau hosts the following websites and landing pages used strategically to expand our brand and direct bookings of vacation stays and events.

- [explorecharleston.com](http://explorecharleston.com) (and mobile)
- [meetcharleston.com](http://meetcharleston.com)
- [charlestonformotorcoaches.com](http://charlestonformotorcoaches.com) and [charlestonforgroups.com](http://charlestonforgroups.com)
- [charlestonweddingguide.com](http://charlestonweddingguide.com)
- [charlestonfamilyfun.com](http://charlestonfamilyfun.com) and [charlestonexplorers.com](http://charlestonexplorers.com)
- [charlestonpackages.com](http://charlestonpackages.com)
- [charlestonareabeaches.com](http://charlestonareabeaches.com)
- [christmasincharleston.com](http://christmasincharleston.com)
- [charlestonly.com](http://charlestonly.com)
- [culinarycharleston.com](http://culinarycharleston.com)
- [africanamericancharleston.com](http://africanamericancharleston.com)
- [charlestongolfguide.com](http://charlestongolfguide.com)

..... Remove and hand this portion of your agenda to a CACVB staff person or see Andy Rankin for details. ....

\_\_\_ YES! As a Travel Council investor, I would like to know more about how my company can develop a mobile microsite with the CACVB.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

## INVESTOR RELATIONS

### WINTER / SPRING ONLINE ADVERTISING

There are still some available spots on [explorecharleston.com](http://explorecharleston.com) in the "Badge and Tile" program. Please contact Sandy Nivens, [snivens@explorecharleston.com](mailto:snivens@explorecharleston.com), Martha Bratton, [mbratton@explorecharleston.com](mailto:mbratton@explorecharleston.com) or Andy Rankin, [arankin@explorecharleston.com](mailto:arankin@explorecharleston.com) to find out what is available. This is a great way to drive last minute business and short term bookings to you!

### CHARLESTONWEDDINGGUIDE.COM

[charlestonweddingguide.com](http://charlestonweddingguide.com) and its companion piece, *The Official Charleston Area Wedding Guide*, are now on sale! Please do not delay in submitting your listings and advertising materials, the deadline to be included is March 29! Please visit [charlestontravelcouncil.com](http://charlestontravelcouncil.com) to review the media kit and learn how to submit your listings online.

## SALES

### TRADE SHOWS FOR JANUARY

Jennifer Aiken will attend both American Bus Association, January 5-9, Charlotte, NC, and National Tour Association January 19-23, Orlando, FL. This will be the first year to host a booth during the Marketplace at both shows.

Chris Hendrix will be attending the South Carolina Society of Association Executives in Columbia on January 24.

Suzanne Wallace will attend a Travel Show at The Villages in Orlando and American Express Mann Travel Show in Charlotte.

Angie Day will attend PCMA Convening Leaders Annual Conference, January 13-17, in Orlando.

Mary Crawford and Marilyn Buist will be attending The Wedding Showcase in Charlotte, North Carolina on January 13.

The Charleston Area Convention Center Complex will host the Annual Boat show January 25-27. This is the largest boat show in the Lowcountry and is a maritime event for the entire family!

### CVB EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

SHINE (Sales & Hospitality Industry Networking & Education) is an extensive three day sales training course for Sales Managers in the hospitality industry.

CADET (Charleston Area Destination Education & Training) is a program comprised of 5 day-long sessions that visit attractions and tours.

Travel Partners is a class that teaches exceptional customer service.

SHINE I and CADET for January are full, but we still have room in the following classes:

SHINE II February 12, 19 and 26.

SHINE for Hospitality Partners March 5, 12 and 19.

Travel Partners:

JANUARY 30, CREATING EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES: Learning how to raise visitor/guest impressions of you and your organization.

FEBRUARY 6, DEALING WITH THE CHALLENGING ONES: What to do when a customer crosses the line.

FEBRUARY 20, SUPERVISOR ACCOUNTABILITY: Equipping Supervisors and Managers with the tools and processes for sustaining an exceptional service environment.

For more information please contact Gloria Clarke, [gclarke@explorecharleston.com](mailto:gclarke@explorecharleston.com).

## VISITOR SERVICES

**DECEMBER 2012:** Visitor Count: 35,014 - Tickets sold: 5,482

We're now entering the slower time of year but it was great to end 2012 with a bang! We had close to 11,000 people come through the Visitor Centers during the last week of December. We're excited that ticket sales for the Southeastern Wildlife Exposition as well as the Oyster Festival have started! Please make sure to remind your guests that tickets for these events, as well as other discounted tickets, are available in all of our official Visitor Centers.

### CHARLESTON VISITOR CENTER

375 Meeting Street

### MT. PLEASANT VISITOR CENTER

99 Harry M. Hallman, Jr. Boulevard

### NORTH CHARLESTON VISITOR CENTER

4975-B Centre Point Drive

### KIAWAH ISLAND VISITOR CENTER

22 Beachwalker Drive

### SANTEE WELCOME CENTER

Southbound I-95 at Santee, Mile Marker 99

## GREATER CHARLESTON RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION, INC.



### CHARLESTON RESTAURANT WEEK

January 10-20, 2013

Choose from 140 restaurants to dine out during this event! Check out menus at: [charlestonrestaurantassociation.com](http://charlestonrestaurantassociation.com). Enjoy!



### World's Largest Oyster Festival

### 30TH ANNUAL LOWCOUNTRY OYSTER FESTIVAL

Sunday, January 27, 2013, 10:30 am – 5:00 pm

Boone Hall Plantation, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

[charlestonrestaurantassociation.com](http://charlestonrestaurantassociation.com)

## MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

In its article, "Mansions and castles you can get married in," [forbes.com](#) (9,599,651 unique monthly visitors) complimented the **Wentworth Mansion** for its elegant architecture and dazzling views.

The **Wentworth Mansion** was named one of America's coziest hotels on [online.wsj.com](#) (5,009,004 unique monthly visitors).

The Charleston area was highlighted in a segment on the **TODAY** show (audience of 3,757,117) for its Top City ranking in the *Condé Nast Traveler* Readers Choice Awards.

Venus Williams' return to the **Family Circle Cup** next spring was mentioned on [sfgate.com](#) (3,290,205 unique monthly visitors).

The **Holiday Inn Charleston Historic Downtown** was mentioned on [chicagotribune.com](#) (3,025,025 unique monthly visitors) for its plans to open in January 2013.

**Callie's Biscuits** was complimented for its pimento cheese spread and Carolina Grits on [blogs.wsj.com](#) (2,072,571 unique monthly visitors).

Chef Sean Brock of **Husk** was mentioned in the *New York Times* (circulation: 1,586,757) for his efforts to exclusively use foods from the South.

In its article, "Weekend Getaway: Charleston, S.C" the [ajc.com](#) (1,415,672 unique monthly visitors) mentioned the **James Island County Park's** Holiday Festival of Lights, **Middleton Place Plantation, Magnolia Plantation and Gardens, Boone Hall Plantation, The Charleston Tea Plantation, Nathaniel Russell House, Charleston Place Hotel, Planter's Inn, Embassy Suites Historic District, Courtyard Marriott, Butcher & Bee, Poogan's Porch** and **FIG**.

The Wal-Mart Carrier Classic on the **USS Yorktown** was highlighted on [cleveland.com](#) (1,380,873 unique monthly visitors).

**Zero George Street** was recommended as a "no fuss luxury" place to stay on [vogue.com](#) (1,202,104 unique monthly visitors).

**James Island County Park's** Holiday Festival of Lights and **Middleton Place's** candelight tours were highlighted in *Go* magazine (circulation: 1,075,000).

In *Travel + Leisure's* (circulation: 970,733) America's Favorite Cities Survey, the Charleston area was ranked among the top five in the following categories: most attractive (#4), friendliest (#3), architecture and cool buildings (#3), safety (#4), fine dining (#1), independent boutiques (#5), antique stores (#2), home décor and design shops (#5) and historical sites and monuments (#5).

In its article, "Mouth of the South," *Virtuoso Life* (circulation: 250,000) mentioned **Circa 1886, BB&T Charleston Wine + Food Festival, Gibbes Museum of Art, Husk, McCrady's, Butcher & Bee, Charleston Place, and Magnolia Plantation and Gardens**.

In its article, "Extra sparkle added to close-to-home getaways," the *Knoxville News Sentinel* (circulation: 81,391) highlighted the **James Island County Park's** Holiday Festival of Lights and **Charleston Harbor Tours'** Carolina Queen holiday cruises.

The *El Nuevo Herald* (circulation: 57,747) highlighted **Boone Hall Plantation, the South Carolina Aquarium, the Gibbes Museum of Art, and the Charleston Museum** in its article, "Charleston, South Carolina Jewel".

The **Charleston Place Hotel** and **Magnolia Plantation and Gardens** were highlighted in *The Jewish Week* (circulation: 36,025) for their appeal to Jewish visitors.

**Spiritline Cruises'** Carolina Girl dinner cruise was mentioned in the *Texarkana Gazette* (circulation: 27,114).

**Lowcountry Local First, Croghan's Jewel Box** and **Wonderworks** were highlighted in a segment on **MSNBC** that raised awareness for Small Business Saturday and shopping local.

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"It's on fire! Savvy travelers are really enjoying this place because there is really so much to offer here. It has history and culture, it has a real easy pace, fantastic, sophisticated dining that's a magnet for foodies everywhere."

— Lisa Gill, Contributing Editor, *Condé Nast Traveler* (circulation: 811,754).