

News & Notes

TRAVEL • MANUFACTURER • RETAIL • ASSOCIATION • TRADE SHOW

TRAVEL

Awaycation vs. Staycation: Pack Your Bags — Going Away Wins!

- One out of four American leisure travelers believes a vacation is a birthright.
- Even the anticipation of vacation travel generates an increase in positive feelings about one's life as a whole, family, economic situation and health.
- Travelers rate their overall health one full point higher (on a scale of 1 to 5) while on vacation.
- They also get three times more deep sleep after their vacation and sleep almost 20 additional minutes after their vacation.
- Research by the Mayo Clinic found that stress leads to a fight-or-flight response, which, unchecked for too long, can cause health effects that include anxiety, irritability, insomnia and depression. The conclusion was that, among other things, Americans need to take a mini-vacation from the usual routine.
- An annual vacation can cut a person's risk of heart attack by 50 percent.
- Life satisfaction also increases during vacation, and these effects continue after returning home, according to a study of employees at the University of Tennessee.
- Rather than detracting from work, vacationing and having a fulfilling life outside of work enhance business accomplishments.
- An inability to take a break can lead to stress, burnout, and a greater likelihood of feeling betrayed and angry when things do not go well at work.



SOURCE: U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION



Americans' Leisure Travel Intentions Trend Slightly Upward

According to travelhorizons™, the quarterly survey of leisure travelers conducted by U.S. Travel Association (www.tia.org) and YPartnership, the U.S. Traveler Sentiment Index™ rose to 90.2 in February 2009 from 78.2 in October 2008 due to an increase in the perceived "affordability of travel." The Index is a derivative of six separate statistical measures that have been tracked since March 2007, at which time the Index was pegged at 100.

The spike in the perceived affordability of travel appears to be a direct result of many travel suppliers' recent efforts to stimulate short-term demand through the aggressive promotion of discounted fares and rates. Promotional pricing and related incentives are now offered by suppliers representing practically every segment of the travel industry — airlines, cruise lines, hotel companies, attractions, rental car companies — some of which are featuring rates and fares that are up to 50 percent off the prices being quoted just six months ago.

"We are very encouraged that more people are signaling a willingness to travel for leisure purposes," said Peter C. Yesawich, chairman of Ypartnership. "This is the first increase we have observed in the Index since January 2008, which indicates that the discounts travel providers and destinations are offering are working to attract more travelers, even in this down economy. As it turns out, this is actually a terrific time to travel because some of these great deals are sure to disappear once the industry begins to recover." ■

I.D. Requirements for Cruise Passengers Tighten

Beginning June 1, Americans will need to show a valid U.S. passport book, a U.S. passport card or other special travel document approved by the Department of Homeland Security when entering the U.S. by land or sea from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda at land border crossings or sea ports-of-entry. ■

U.S. Travel Association presents first-ever U.S. Travel Rally Day

The first-ever U.S. Travel Rally Day has been planned for May 12 during National Travel and Tourism Week. Calling it a bold and concerted effort, Roger Dow, president and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association, says the event will represent how travel fuels jobs and economies.

An official planning toolkit was created to provide the resources to organize the event that will bring to life the workforce that is created locally by travel and tourism. The toolkit contains samples of a media advisory, press release, letter to the editor, news op-ed and invita-

tion to rally participants, among other resources. USTA has asked convention and visitors bureau staff to partner with business leaders and personnel from hotels, meeting facilities, transportation providers, attractions, restaurants and others, and engage elected officials and media.

“U.S. Travel Rally Day is an unprecedented nationwide opportunity to say ‘Travel Matters’ on one day and under one banner,” said Dow. “Imagine the impact that we’ll create when cities of all sizes unite for the industry that employs one of every eight American workers.”

On the Bookshelf

DR. STUART ROSE, AN EMERGENCY ROOM PHYSICIAN



Stuart Rose, M.D.

and book author, has launched www.travmed.com, an online health resource for international vacationers, business travelers and outdoor enthusiasts — a complete source for all things related to healthy travel. Updated daily, the website includes: Destination reports for over 200 countries that cover time zone, vaccination requirements, disease risk summaries, outbreak news, malaria maps, embassy contact information and a list of

hospitals and physicians, plus a travel clinic directory, and an updated list of clinics in the United States, Canada and overseas.

Rose notes that as many as 70% of travelers report an illness or impairment when traveling abroad. “Many of the illnesses associated with traveling out of the county, such as malaria, hepatitis and even travelers’ diarrhea, are preventable,” says Rose. “It’s important to help reduce some of the risks by doing your homework ahead of time.”

An assistant professor of emergency medicine at Tufts University and founder and president of Travel Medicine, Rose is also the author of *The International Travel Health Guide*, a concise source of travel health information and a favorite resource used by travel health practitioners. Now available online at no charge, this 22-chapter health guide is the only travel health resource in the United States updated bi-weekly. The book covers all of the essentials of health-related travel, from pre-travel vaccinations, jet lag and motion sickness to traveling with an existing illness or while pregnant, plus has essential links for the global traveler: preparation checklists, insect-bite prevention, U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories, CDC links and more.

VENICE: EASY SIGHTSEEING BY DONALD H. BOWLING

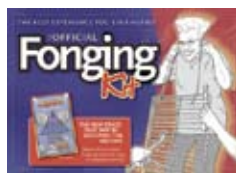
is the first in the author’s series of travel guidebooks which provides information that will encourage middle-aged, elderly baby boomers and disabled travelers in wheelchairs to visit Italy. Having surveyed each stop on the tour, the author offers easy access to more than 70 sights, identifying potential physi-

cal barriers and offering solutions and providing factual information about each sight. The book is available online at Amazon.com and BookSurge.com, and through additional wholesale and retail channels worldwide. For more information, visit the author’s website at www.easytravelbooks.com.

EACH EDITION IN THE LITTLE CREAM BOOK SERIES

highlights a particular travel experience, featuring 26 destinations around the world from A-Z, and is filled with the creme-de-la-creme of luxury travel addresses. Information is presented in a concise and simple-to-use address book format and comes in its own deluxe gift box. These luxury destination address books are the perfect gifts for travel lovers and connoisseurs. Seven titles have been released: *Cool Destinations*; *Powder* (winter sports); *Goodwill* (philanthropic travel); *Architecture*; *Romance*; *Golf*; and *Drives*. All editions can be personalized. Available for \$20 on the publisher’s website at www.littlecreambook.com.

FOLLOWING THE CRITICAL ACCLAIM RECEIVED FOR



Fonging for the Soul — a book hailed by *The Washington Post* for delving “into the co(s)mically spiritual practice of hanging an oven rack from your fingers and then sticking said fingers into your ears while others tap the rack with kitchen utensils” — Peace Evolutions LLC introduces its new Official Fonging Kit. Travelers whiling away their time at the airport can pull out their kit and fong to their heart’s content. Each Fonging Kit includes *Fonging for the Soul* by Erasmus Caffery, a mini “certified hypoallergenic” fonging rack, two shoestrings (with popular “Live, fong & prosper” imprint), a “Fonging Safety Guide” pot holder, wooden and plastic kitchen utensils, four latex profonglactics (standard size) and a FONG ON car sticker. For more information, contact Peace Evolutions LLC at 301-263-9282; www.peace-evolutions.com.

Travel Trivia

Cholulu de Rivadahia in Mexico is the largest pyramid in the world; it is 177 feet tall and covers 25 acres.

The country with the most number of islands is Finland.

Africa is the continent that has the most countries represented in the U.N.

The Mediterranean Sea gets its name from the Latin phrase meaning “sea in the middle of land.”

TRAVEL metrics

- The travel and tourism industry is one of the country's largest employers with 7.5 million direct travel-generated jobs. You could fill the Louisiana Superdome a hundred times over with people directly employed in the industry.
- The right to annual vacations of a minimum duration is prescribed by law in 78 countries; some are so convinced of the necessity that there are penalties for deferring the vacation.
- Although airlines are making more of an effort at cleaning their cabins, research shows that airplane tray tables, seats and other areas are cleaned on average only every 30 days. Fortunately, there are a number of TGA members introducing travel goods that put a layer of protection between you, your tray table and your seat — and the dozens of passengers who have used them before you. ■

Retail Myth #7 Debunked “The Customer is Always Right”

Shari Waters, retailing guide (some say guru) for about.com, takes on the industry aphorism of “The Customer Is Always Right.” Hold that thought; better yet, shelve it permanently. “No, the customer is not always right,” Waters notes. “Sometimes the customer is quite wrong. Customers make honest mistakes and sometimes they want something for nothing. While the customer isn’t always right, it’s our job as retailers to make them feel like they are always important.” Read Waters “Top 9 Myths of Retailing” at <http://retail.about.com>. ■

[Retail Details]

The Wal-Mart Foundation provides financial and volunteer support to more than 100,000 charitable organizations each year.

According to RetailGuide.com, the Mall of America in Minnesota attracts more visitors annually than Walt Disney World, Graceland and the Grand Canyon combined.

Top Sellers Awarded James Bond Attaché

During the final three months of 2008, ZERO Halliburton sales representative Jonathan Russi conducted a regional sales contest in the northwest and southwest regions of the U.S. The sales associate in each region that sold the most ZERO Halliburton products (Classic Aluminum, Z-Flex polycarbonate and Profile Leather or

Ballistic Nylon) between October 1, 2008 and December 31, 2008, would win the Q4-PS aluminum attaché which was carried by James Bond in 2008’s “Quantum of Solace.” The winners were Ben Naples (Southwest Territory) from Peninsula Luggage in Primm, NV, and Patrick Bell (Northwest Territory) from Bergmans Luggage in Seattle, WA. ■

Mighty Bright at Joshua Tree National Park



Ordinarily, the Mighty Bright Carabiner is a super-functional light that can clip onto one’s purse, belt loop or key ring for seeing in the dark. But in Joshua Tree National Park, a couple of Mighty Bright employees strung together more than 4,000 of these Carabiner lights and carried them up a mountain in the dark. The chain, as it extended from top to bottom of the mountain, was visible for miles and gathered much attention. Ryan Caddell from Mighty Bright explains, “The law of large numbers, amongst my friends, states that if you have a lot of anything you can do something cool with it. We made a hill glow with a cool little light. It was really pretty.” ■



Ben Naples (Southwest Territory) from Peninsula Luggage in Primm, NV, (left) with ZERO Halliburton president David Sebens at The 2009 Travel Goods Show.



Patrick Bell (Northwest Territory) from Bergmans Luggage in Seattle, WA, (right) receives his case from Jonathan Russi.

High Sierra Sponsors Fundraising Event

High Sierra Sport Company, specializing in user-friendly adventure travel gear, sponsored the Annual Janss Pro Am Classic in March by providing messenger bags. Taking place in Sun Valley, Idaho, the Janss Pro Am Classic is one of the Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation's biggest fundraising events. It benefits more than 500 youth that participate in alpine, freestyle, cross country and snowboard programs sponsored by the Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation.

Also in March, High Sierra sponsored the Pacific Crest Trail Association Trail Fest by providing 450 Talus lumbar packs for its attendee goodie bags

and 12 AT458 26-inch Drop-Bottom Wheeled Duffels for volunteer award winners. Trail Fest brings awareness to the National Trails System Act, which designated the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) as a National Scenic Trail in 1968.

Complete from border to border, the Pacific Crest Trail National Scenic Trail is one continuous scenic trail along the crest of the major mountain ranges of the Pacific Rim from Mexico to Canada. The work of keeping this 2,650-mile trail open, protected and managed never ends. Many miles of trail remain on private land, and the wilderness character of numerous other miles is at risk. Working with the USDA Forest

Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service and California State Parks, the PCTA is the voice of the PCT and its mission is to protect, preserve and promote the Trail for future generations. Trail Fest 2009 took place in Portland, Oregon. ■

Acquires Registrations for Trademark

High Sierra Sport Company has acquired all Mervyns' registrations for the trademark High Sierra. Mervyns had previously been using the High Sierra name for a variety of its products, including men's, women's and children's clothing and shoes. ■

THE NEWS

- Featured in Jay Jones' March story in the *Los Angeles Times* were **Landor & Hawa's** Sub Zero G Collection, **Heys USA's** BioCase with its clever use of biometric technology and **Traveler's Supply's** Traveler-ER USB drive. Each product had been recognized with a Product Innovation Award at The 2009 Travel Goods Show in Las Vegas. **humangear's** GoToob, recipient of the TGA Buzz Award, and **Kangopack's** anti-microbial fabric barrier that was designed to fit inside airport checkpoint bins, were also included in Jones' feature.

- The first orders for the **Conceal Wear** Belt-Less Travel/Money Pouch have been received and processed. These orders — a direct result of the visibility that the Conceal Wear product received at The Travel Goods Show in Las Vegas — weren't the only positive result. Another direct result of participating in The Show: Conceal Wear earned a listing in Phil Baker's article, "Gadget Guy Phil Baker on Gadgets Galore at Annual Travel Goods Show," featured on Peter Greenberg's website www.petergreenberg.com. Baker visited the Conceal Wear booth during his quest for interesting new products for his article.

Also featured in Baker's article were these products: **High Sierra's** NL218 Carry-On Expandable Wheeled Upright, an expandable briefcase with a notebook sleeve by **Briggs & Riley**, **humangear's** GoToob, **Travelon's** Bag Bungee, the tugo drink holder from **Fli**, Traveler-ER USB drive from **Traveler's Supply**, **FlyRight** Jet Lag Formula, **Bottlewise**, **Zoobies**, **Kangopack** and **Accessory Sports** sports-themed leather bag tags.

- The April issue of *Porthole Cruise Magazine* gave **Heys USA's** EcoCase a nice write-up with photo, according to Heys USA's Marcy Schackne. *Porthole* is the world's leading cruise publication with more than a million readers each month. The magazine plans to include Heys USA's Britto with a photo in the July issue.



The New York Map Baseball seen in "Duplicity"

- Julia Roberts is not the only star in "Duplicity," the romantic spy thriller that reteams her with Clive Owen and opened in theaters in March. Look for the City Map Baseball Collection, handmade by TGA member **Bergino**, in a supporting role.

- On January 22, 2009, the "Ellen DeGeneres Show" did a segment on eight of the US Airways passengers and crew of flight 1549 and their "Miracle on the Hudson." After sharing their remarkable stories, Ellen gave each of the eight guests a set of **Hartmann** Stratum Collection luggage that included a 22" Mobile Tote and Attachable Tote. At the end of the segment, Hartmann's luggage was rolled out onto the stage to the applause of the survivors and audience alike. ■



Zoobies Names Little Jet Set Retailer of the Year

Little Jet Set, the online retailer of specialty travel products for kids, has been named “Retailer of the Year 2008” by Zoobies, the manufacturer of the multi-award winning Zoobie Pets, an innovative 3-in-1 pillow, blanket and plush animal. Zoobies’ Vice President of Marketing Ryan Treft announced the award at the American International Toy Fair in February, acknowledging Little Jet Set “for excellence in sales, spokespersonship

and Zoobie love.”

“For the Retailer of the Year Award, we looked at sales numbers, but also the retailers’ branding and marketing efforts. Little Jet Set stood out in all three areas,” stated Treft. “In addition, Little Jet Set’s travel-related site serves the perfect niche market for Zoobies as we like to think of them as the perfect travel item. Little Jet Set is the go-to place for kid’s travel items.” Treft also credited Little Jet Set for its effective PR

and marketing efforts.

Little Jet Set was co-founded by a pair of seasoned attorneys turned expert “mom travelers” who decided to take a break from practicing law to launch LittleJetSet.com, a one-stop shopping destination for everything parents need to make traveling with kids easy and fun. Co-Founders Hana Wolf and Nisha Cordero offer solutions to the inherent challenges of traveling with young children. ■

ALDANews

The American Luggage Dealers Association (ALDA) Board and membership meetings were held in March at the Las Vegas Hilton just prior to The Travel Goods Show.

Those elected to serve on the ALDA Board include: Kim Clark, Leather, Inc., president; Andy Lubell, Ace Luggage and Gifts, secretary; Chuck Weisbart, It’s...In The Bag!, CFO. Directors include Phil Wein, Irv’s Luggage; Tim Bleish, Bag and Baggage; and John Ebb, Bretts Luggage and Gifts. Dave Southard and David Green continue as directors. Donald Casati, E. Vincent Luggage, now serves as immediate past president, with Jay Friedman, Lazar’s Luggage, as an honorary board member.

Newly-elected President Kim Clark started out by asking each member to tell how long they’d been in business. “I think we were all amazed on learning just how long our businesses had been around — it must have been around 500 years collectively! That tells me we know how to survive in any economy — we just have to stick together, share ideas and help each other out.”

Being savvy retailers, ALDA’s members know how important it is to advertise in a down economy. That’s why this year’s upcoming Travel Season Flyer program is crucial. Chairman Jay Friedman discussed the outstanding line-up of luggage

that will be advertised — brand names at great prices. During the import merchandise presentation, six new Passage2 Quick Scan checkpoint-friendly briefs were introduced.

David Saad of Luggage World, Minneapolis, was honored as ALDA Briggs & Riley Dealer of the Year. Congratulations, David!

The next ALDA Board meeting will be held at the Knickerbocker Hotel in Chicago on June 24, with the membership meeting following the two-day Summer Show on Saturday, June 27. ■



Pictured left to right, ALDA’s past presidents Jay Friedman, Tim Bleish, Donald Casati with ALDA’s newly appointed president Kim Clark

NLDANews

The National Luggage Dealers Association (NLDA Associates, Inc.) held its 84th annual general membership meeting at Harrah’s Las Vegas Hotel & Casino just prior to The Travel Goods Show. Jeff Izenson, Specialty Luggage, Pittsburgh, PA, and John Mori, Mori Luggage & Gifts, Atlanta, GA, were re-elected president and vice-president, respectively. Rick Gilger, Luggage & Leather, Houston, TX; John Heth, Groskopf’s, Grand Rapids, MI; Cheryl Hughes, Nicholas Luggage & Gifts, Kansas City, MO;

David Niven, Kidd-Russ Luggage & Gifts, Shreveport, LA; and Marty Reininger, Edwards Luggage, Foster City, CA, were elected to new three-year terms on the Board of Directors. The next meeting of the Association will be held in Chicago from June 23-28 at the Hotel Intercontinental in Chicago, IL.

The Sixth Annual Summer Luggage, Gift and Travel Goods Show will be held June 25-26 at Navy Pier in Chicago. This is the second largest luggage and travel goods show and is open to all qualified buyers from the luggage and

travel goods industry. Doug Fleener, a dynamic speaker who focuses on the retail industry, will give a presentation called, “Got Momentum? Creating Every Day Success in Retail.” This event is co-sponsored by Briggs & Riley and NLDA Associates, Inc.

The NLDA gift and advertising committees gathered in Chicago the third week of April to hold meetings with key vendors and to review submitted product for the purpose of selecting merchandise for the 2009 holiday cata-

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log. These selections were then presented to the advertising committee and NLDA's ad agency for the purpose of designing and paginating this very important and valuable advertising vehicle. The results of these meetings will then be presented to the membership by the marketing group during the general membership meeting in June.

The National Luggage Dealers Association (NLDA Associates, Inc) is pleased to announce its 2009 committee assignments:

- **ADVERTISING:** John Mori, chair, Mori Luggage & Gifts, Atlanta, GA; Jon Cantwell, John's 5th Avenue, San Diego, CA; Maggie Greco, Village Luggage & Gifts, Rockville Centre, NY.
- **GIFTS AND LEATHERGOODS:** John Heth, chair, Groskopf's Inc., Grand Rapids, MI; Devon Corley, Luggage & Leather, Houston, TX; Sarah Middleton, Mori Luggage & Gifts, Atlanta, GA; Shelley Norcross, Leather World, Newton Centre, MA.
- **LUGGAGE AND BUSINESS CASES:** Cheryl Hughes, chair, Nicholas Luggage & Gifts, Kansas City, MO; Bob Brenner, Brenner Luggage, Indianapolis, IN; Steve Silver, Silver of Westport, Westport, CT; Gregg Simon, Portland Luggage, Portland, OR. ■

NLDAViews

It is no secret that our industry is struggling with the horrible economic reality that we are faced with. For my business, the challenge at hand is to survive until the economy turns around and we are once again on the road to prosperity. It is more important than ever to weather this storm by belonging to a trade association like the National Luggage Dealers Association. NLDA provides so many opportunities to make me a better merchant and to know that I am not alone. Networking with other NLDA friends gives me the advantage of hearing how others are doing and what ideas they have to make them more successful. Being able to purchase exclusive merchandise at extraordinary margins with extended dating from NLDA import and domestic programs is a huge advantage. Banding together to support key vendors that, in turn, nets us better margins and better relationships with those vendors would be impossible if I were on my own. I know there were many independent retailers who decided not to come to the Las Vegas show. I think if those retailers were members of a buying group like NLDA, there would have been more reasons to attend. The value of NLDA is immeasurable. It just makes complete business sense to join with other retailers and collectively use each other's strength to survive these rocky times. If you are a member of NLDA, you aren't facing these times alone.

Marty Reininger

Edwards Luggage, Foster City, CA



NATIONAL LUGGAGE DEALERS ASSOCIATION

OPPORTUNITY • FELLOWSHIP • PROFITABILITY • LEADERSHIP

RETAIL SUCCESS TIP FOR 2009 — JOIN NLDA

What do leading independent luggage stores across the country have in common? They are all members of the National Luggage Dealers Association. Join NLDA and take advantage of our resources and benefits including:

- A multi-million dollar import program with exclusive merchandise at incredible margins.
- Vendor Programs and buying shows that result in millions of dollars of savings.
- Business networking events with other top industry members to share success stories.
- A powerful consumer marketing program that produces 4-color high quality catalogs for local distribution at a great value.

To learn more about NLDA and how joining will enhance your business
call 847.998.6869 • email marilyn@nlda.com • visit www.nlda.com