



**Visitor Industry Council  
Meeting Agenda  
Holiday Inn & Suites Rochester Marketplace  
Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
3:30PM-5:00PM.**



**I. Welcome**

- a. Bill Gormont, VIC Chairperson
- b. Manoj Patel, General Manger, Holiday Inn & Suites Rochester Marketplace

**II. Introductions**

**III. Member Announcements**

**The Mystery Company**—March 27, 2009. The Mystery Company & the Inn on Broadway are partnering to bring you fabulous murder mystery theatre. Sumptuous food, thrilling entertainment and a great time. Contact Debbie, 585-723-3670

**Artisan Works**—Saturday April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at noon. Membership Drive Concert Series. First concert featuring Stephanie Wrembel who provided soundtrack from Woody Allen's latest movie Vickie Christina Barcelona. Contact Steve Ouriel, 228-1770 or 330-1738

**Rochester City School District OACES**—March 17, 2009. Employment placement for any of your employment needs. Many students are already employed at hotels and restaurants in this area. They are all over 21. Contact Roseann Caiola at 585-324-9912.

**Technology Rentals of America**—April 1, 2009. We are sponsors for SOHO Rochester (small office, home office) show. Complementary tickets are available online. [www.sohorochester.com](http://www.sohorochester.com). For those who work out of their home or work for a small business (under 30 employees). Contact Lisa Altman at 585-546-1460.

**Gay Alliance of Genesee Valley (GAGV)**—Rochester Pride 2009, July 10-19 2009. Go to [www.rochesterpride.com](http://www.rochesterpride.com) for 2009 Parade, festival and picnic sponsorships. Sponsorships range from \$250-\$10,000, if you are eager to market to the LGBT community. Contact Michael Hardy at 845-709-5603.

**Clarion Riverside Hotel**—April 1<sup>st</sup>. The Clarion Riverside Hotel will become the Radisson Hotel Rochester Riverside. The Grand Opening will be held April 7<sup>th</sup> and will begin at 2pm. This is a press media event with cocktails and more. Contact Cheryl Mantia 585-546-6400x7224 [www.radisson.com/rochesterny.riverside](http://www.radisson.com/rochesterny.riverside)

**Tasteful Connections**—March 27, 2009. The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Hunter's Hope Ball. Contact [www.huntershope.org](http://www.huntershope.org) or [www.tastefulconnections.com](http://www.tastefulconnections.com)

**IV. VisitRochester Program Updates**

**Greg Marshall**—Senior Vice President/Director of Marketing. Greg provided handout

of 2009 Member Co-op Programs & Opportunities—see attached. The handout includes program and opportunities that are free for members and programs and opportunities available only to members at a cost. It is important to collaborate with these opportunities especially as festival season is upon us.

There will be a VisitRochester Travel Guide this year. The Democrat and Chronicle has agreed to partner with VisitRochester again in 2009 to publish the guide. We will print one 300 thousand copies of one issue for the year. The guide will be released in the first week of May. If you have advertised in the guide in the past you will receive a call from the Democrat and Chronicle to advertise this year. There will be more information at the next VIC meeting.

We are very aware that there are things we don't know. Hotels in Rochester are reporting good business, while some hotels elsewhere in the nation report losing 50-70% business. Rochester is holding many meetings this year. It is important to be upbeat and proactive to combat the negative view in the media that people are traveling. I met with Dennis Mullen of I Love NY; he is from Rochester and said that the concept of people not going to glamorous destinations opens a great opportunity for secondary destinations like Rochester.

**Amanda Norsen**—Director of Member Care & Web Administration.

You're invited! To our quarterly open house for perspective new members. Please take this opportunity to share with friends, new employees or even come yourself to learn more about VisitRochester and membership. The Open House will be at the George Eastman House Café (900 East Avenue, Rochester NY 14607) on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009 between 3:00-6:00PM. We are also inviting to you to view the current exhibit at the George Eastman House, TruthBueaty: Pictorialism and the Photograph as Art, 1845-1945. Please RSVP to Amanda Norsen, Director of Member Care 585-279-8302, or Peter Hahn, Membership Sales Representative at 585-279-8319.

**V. Spotlight Presentation—Dave Sek, Owner of Instant Sign Center**

Instant Sign Center has been producing signs in the Greater Rochester Area for over 20 years. Some of the signs we have created are, real estate sales, retail ads, retail store signs, yards signs, Truck and vehicle signs, restaurant signs and much more. Instant Sign Center can provide a large variety of signs from small to large, a-frames, banners, window decals, lawn signs, engraved plastic, magnetic signs, any kind of sign. Corrugated Plastic signs are durable and inexpensive. Beginning this year Instant Sign Center now provides vehicle wraps, and will install the vinyl decal. We can wrap anything, not just vehicles. Instant Sign Center is a full service provider from concept to design to fabrication to installation. We can provide any kind of sign, and if we can't we will find someone who can. All we want is a chance to give you a quote. Instant Sign Center is committed to providing you with high quality signage with a fast turnaround.

**VI. Presentation—The Convention Calendar and How to Make it Work For You.**

Tracy Armstrong, Director of Community Wide Convention Sales and Marketing  
We are having a stellar year for conventions. We had a great first quarter our numbers look good. We have only seen a 5% drop. Many of the people in this room are ones that touch these conventioners after we have booked them. That's where you should take advantage of the convention calendar. So I'm going to give you a little background and take a look at a convention calendar and talk about some leads, and then open it up for some questions. I am here to help you, so I encourage you to ask questions. Everyone should be getting the convention calendar. One comes out in January and the other in July. The calendar and monthly updates are in the monthly Viz Biz newsletter. The links are now in the right side or the newsletter in bold letters. If no one

in your organization is receiving the monthly newsletter with the convention calendar then please contact Amanda Norsen. The convention sales managers for VisitRochester (and their markets) are Tim James (fraternal, ethnic, religious, military/Veterans, Deaf & Hard-Of-Hearing, Social Welfare, African American), Michael Hardy (Medical, Cultural, GLBT, Greek Letter Societies, Government), Carol Bartlett (NYS all Markets), and Wendy Ford (Agricultural, Hobby, Optics, Imaging, Photography, Engineering, Government, Educational, Trade, Business, and Commercial). We target markets that make sense for Rochester and are niche markets in this community. Many co-inside with the colleges and universities in the area, and companies in the area. This has been a successful blend for us. The cities we compete with in New York State are Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, Lake Placid, Lake George (Sagamore Resort), Long Island, Niagara Falls, Saratoga Springs, Syracuse, Verona (Turning Stone Casino) and Westchester. There are many reasons why we compete with these cities. Parking can be an issue for us and some of you are already offering complementary parking. The cities we compete with the most often (Nationally) are Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Hartford, Louisville, Milwaukee, Niagara Falls, Pittsburgh, Providence, Raleigh, Richmond, Spokane, Valley Forge, and Virginia Beach/ Norfolk. When looking to book convention business a standard lead goes out to the local hotels. The lead will have the account name, the rooms needed, the competing cities, contacts, due dates, and key facts. After we gather the information from the hotels we put together a bid book. The bid book is customized for each group. It's impressive, our customers really like it, and we are the only ones who do that. Our competitors do other things, but not as impressive as our bid book. Booking pace for conventions is 3 years, so right now we are looking at 2011, 2012 and 2013. The convention calendar gives you all the information. They rarely want a phone call. "Snail mail" sometimes works, but e-mail is usually the best. Every group is different. Some bring family with them, some do not. Some are looking for offsite things to do and entertainment, others are not. The meeting planners are looking for an enhancement for their attendees or to fulfill a business need for themselves (signs, AV, office supplies, etc...).

**Question:** *Stacy Kurtz, Casa Larga Vineyard.* When do we approach a meeting planner? Does the convention calendar go out a few months before the convention arrives?

**Answer:** The Convention Calendar is published twice a year, once in January and then again in July, and then monthly updates are included in the Viz Biz newsletter. The monthly update isn't necessarily for that month. It's just the business that was booked that month between calendar publications. We are now including the full calendar with each update in the monthly Viz Biz. The Convention Calendar has conventions in it from now until 2014. As soon as it is booked by the sales department it is in the calendar (in a monthly update). They are looking for added value. They like discounts. The conventions have a table in the gallery if you want to offer something for them, we can put it on the table. If you have an upcoming event it is so very important that you put your events on our event calendar. We use that to tell planners and attendees what is available. You add events yourself on to our website by visiting [www.visitrochester.com](http://www.visitrochester.com). If your event isn't on that calendar then they don't know that it is going on. It is a free benefit of your membership.

Kelli O'Connor, Director of Convention and Visitor Services.

I preach customization. It is what sets us apart from our every other company and membership organization reaching out to these meeting planners. Here is a breakdown of time frames to reach out to meeting planners based on when they are thinking about

these issues. Transportation 4-6 months out, Restaurants, 2-4 months out, Printing/signage 10-12 months out, gifts/giveaways 3-6 months out, and off site venues and entertainment 10-12 months out. You can send information years ahead of time but they are probably not going to read it and I don't want you to waste your money, it is easier to provide customization 2-4 months out etc... If a client contacts me (Kelli) with a need then I know no one has contact that client. I then send out a lead to all members in that category. Once I receive your quotes I put together a quote sheet for the meeting planner. Then it is up to you. If you responded to my lead I have already provided you with the contact's name and contact information. Once I send them this quote sheet I leave it up to them as to where they want to go. We do not suggest one member over another. I then pass it on to meeting planner so they can contact the member on their own. There is sign up sheet for convention leads as well. If you are new or want to provide the appropriate contact person. You can sign up on that sheet at the front table, and we will send you leads appropriate for you. There are also times we are looking for quotes for conventions not yet booked. Sometimes they are looking for quotes for feasibility. When we send out those leads not all the details will be available. This would help take out the objections to the bid.

One other thing to mention. It is worth the time for you to Google the name of the organization. Look at their current year's conference program, and see if there is anything that you could provide for them and then customize your letter or e-mail to the client. Let them know that when they are in Rochester you can see they may need your service/product and that you can provide it.

Some suggestions when using the Convention Calendar: Read everything clearly, we try to include everything we can to help you make a business decisions. If your response is missing important information requested in the lead, this can hurt your bid. Be prompt with your responses, the dates for responses are on the sheet. Discount if you can, this can really help you as they will feel like they are getting a deal. Follow up, some leads will say not to contact the client, others will say you can. If you cannot contact the client then contact Kelli.

### **Open for questions**

**Question:** Some people may be intimidated by the large conventions.

**Answer:** The convention calendar includes conventions large and small ranging anywhere from 50 people to 10,000 people. Even if they are a large group, don't be intimidated because they will likely have smaller sub groups within the larger group.

**Comment:** Many conventions have exhibitors, and they are looking to provide products, goodie bags and vendor special offers, even care packages. You can find out when you Google them if they are looking for exhibitors.

**Question:** Can we have pamphlets handed out or put in a gift bag if we provide them?

**Answer:** pamphlets and handouts are very unpopular right now due to growing environmental concerns and everyone "going green". If you contact us, we can include your flyers or pamphlets at the VisitRochester information table and this way you save having to make as many copies.

### **Adjournment**

## Save the Date!

### **April VIC Meeting**

Tuesday, April 21, 2009  
RockVentures  
3:00 p.m. - Registration  
3:30 p.m. - Meeting

### **May VIC Meeting**

Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Rochester Plaza Hotel  
3:00 p.m.—Registration  
3:30 p.m.—Meeting

**If you are interested in hosting a VIC meeting in 2009,  
please contact Amanda Norsen 585-279-8302.**

## **Steering Committee Representatives**

*The Steering Committee is a representation of the membership. They are here to communicate the needs of each business they represent and be able to "bring to the table" any comments or concerns members might have. As well as make decisions about VIC meetings, guest speakers, and educational seminars.*

### **Chairperson**

Bill Gormont, Empire Magic  
585-227-9760

### **Vice Chairperson**

Cheryl Mantia, Clarion Riverside Hotel  
585-546-6400

### **See & Do**

Colleen Brown, Geva Theatre Center  
585-232-1366

Jenna Chard, George Eastman House  
585-271-3361 x238

### **Community**

Open Position

### **Sleep**

Open Position

Nancy Sweazy, Hampton Inn North  
585/663-6070

### **Regional Representative**

Michael Fults, Ramada Geneva Lakefront  
315-789-0400 ext. 2602

### **Eat & Drink**

Karen Heroux, Simply Crepes  
585-314-6036

### **Shop**

Karen Dodson, Waterloo Premium Outlets  
315-539-1100

### **Services**

Eric Van Camp, Enterprise Rent-A-Car  
585-729-7122

Open Position

## **2009 VIC Meeting Schedule**

<b>VIC Meeting Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
April 21 <sup>st</sup>	3:30pm	RockVentures
May 19 <sup>th</sup>	3:30pm	Rochester Plaza Hotel

**Attendance:**

Victoria Benz	Artisan Works
Steve Ouriel	Artisan Works
Dale Gargiulo	Best Western
Bob Scott	Bob Scott Productions
Kelly Williamson	Brookwood Inn
Melanie Plummer	By the Basketful
Helen Gormont	Carpe Diem Travel
Cathy Worthington	Carpe Diem Travel
Stacy Kurtz	Casa Larga Vineyards
Justin Cheshire	Cheshire AV
Cheryl Mantia	Clarion Riverside Hotel
Kristina Silloway	Comfort Inn West
Hetal Patel	Country Inn and Suites
Cynthia Schenk	Country Inn and Suites
Christine Bergeson	Country Inn Rochester
Yvonne Graham	Doubletree Hotel
Catherine Yarger	Downtown Special Services
Bill Gormont	Empire Magic/ Motivation Vision
Eric Van Camp	Enterprise Rent-A-Car
Deborah Stankevich	Genesee Country Inn B&B
Richard Stankevich	Genesee Country Inn B&B
Jenna Chard	George Eastman House
Dawn Kellogg	Geva Theatre Center
Colleen Brown	Geva Theatre Center
Barbara Morgenstern	Golf Week
Manoj Patel	Holiday Inn and Suites
Dave Sek	Instant Sign Center
Renée Veniskey	Marriot, E.J.D. Corporation
Donna DeFord	Memorial Art Gallery
Miranda Kenyon	Monroe County Sports
Rachel DeGuzman	Nazareth College Arts Center
Elaine Montrose	Personal Tours of Rochester
Gail Stubits-Allan	Radisson Hotel Rochester Airport
Amy Galens	Ramada Geneva Lakefront
Carol McCrossen	Remington's Restaurant
Dave Mallaber	Rochester Shuttle Express
Terri Goebel	RockVentures
Shari DeSimone	Shari's Event Services.
Karen Heroux	Simply Crepes
Pierre Heroux	Simply Crepes
Kim Jarvis	Tasteful Connections
Lisa Altman	Technology Rentals of America

Bill Gilchrist	the Dealers
Beth Flannigan	The Woodcliff Hotel and Spa
Calin Lawrence	VisitRochester
Greg Marshall	VisitRochester
Amanda Norsen	VisitRochester
Tim James	VisitRochester
Peter Hahn	VisitRochester
Tracy Armstrong	VisitRochester
Paula Savage	VisitRochester
Claire Wysokowski	VisitRochester
Kelli O'Connor	VisitRochester
Teresa Ingerham	Water street Music Hall
Bob Leisten	Wayne Country B&B Association
Barbara Leisten	Wayne Country B&B Association

**First Time Attendees:**

Holland Hofma-Brown	A Matter of Taste
Michelle Putnam	AAA Western NY
Cheryl Ebert	Cooley Group
Hetal Patel	Country Inn and Suites
Cynthia Schenk	Country Inn and Suites
Peter Arnold	Genesee Country Village and Museum
Jennifer DiGetano	Guest
Kelli Cunningham	Long Acre Farms
Debbie Lestz Teahan	Mystery Company
Dominick Morano	Portofino Bistro
Alicia Borelli	Portofino Bistro
Roseann Caiola	Rochester City School District
Kathy Trainor	SUNY Geneseo
Tom Tehan	The Mystery Company
Shannon Barrows	Travel Team USA