



Santa Clarita Tourism Bureau - Zoom Check-In
April 29, 2020 @ 2:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES

Ari Larson (Fillmore Chamber of Commerce); Danny Efron (Hilton Garden Inn); Beth Heiserman (Reyes Winery); Sahara Powell (Hollywood Burbank Airport); Jennifer Wampler (The Gentle Barn); Maria Christopher (Heritage Valley Tourism Bureau); John Marquez (Santa Paula Chamber of Commerce); Jo Anne Hilario (Holiday Inn Express); Ben Brown (TastePro); Taylor Irving (Embassy Suites Valencia); Pat Downing, Garrett Wedel, Marilyn Sourgose, Evan Thomason, Amy Buterbaugh, Lourdes Vallin (City of Santa Clarita)

UPDATES

Evan Thomason – Just wanted to check in on everyone. A few updates:

- City Hall is closed; many events have been canceled. We're currently following LA County mandates, but as of right now we are planning to reopen mid-May. Mostly everyone in City Hall is working remotely, but we still have some folks at city Hall to help with building processes.
- I've been attending a lot of webinars and getting useful information. SCV Chamber is doing weekly webinars and so is the Small Business Development. I've been keeping up with US Travel, CVENT, and Visit California and they've been giving out pretty consistent information. Everyone is following the three phases – we are currently in survival and should be planning for the recovery phase. They're all saying to keep your social media presence and engage with your audience, but don't be deaf to the current situation. Tourism Economics has some interesting analytics. After the recession in 2008 there was a spike in travel.
- Zagster is temporarily shut down. You may see the PACE bikes around, but they cannot be used. From what I understand, bikeshare programs around the country have stopped. We were looking into getting these electric scooter bikes, but we'll see.
- We were updating our bus wrap and have been talking to our ad agency and trying to figure that out. The drive market will be the first to come back. It's important to let people know that you are still here, give people confidence, and that they will be completely safe when visiting. Government funding is taking a hit, luckily, we're a DMO and have our Tourism Marketing District funds, so we'll be well suited for when things open back up.

Marilyn Sourgose – I've been hearing the same thing as Evan no the webinars I've been on: the drive market will be the first target audience to return. A few helpful links:

- I listened in on a CVENT webinar today – here's a link to their "*Hotel Manager's Guide To Marketing - During Uncertain Times*": <https://www.cvent.com/en/resource/hospitality-cloud/hotel-digital-marketing-strategy-uncertain-times>
- For the latest travel research, find studies by Tourism Economics on the US Travel website: *COVID-19 Travel Industry Research*: <https://www.ustravel.org/toolkit/covid-19-travel-industry-research>
- Thanks to our former intern, we have a list of business that are open for delivery on our website: visitsantaclarita.com/takeout.
- Courtyard by Marriott and Hilton Garden Inn are offering a remote place to work away from distractions: visitsantaclarita.com/workspace.
- We are uploading "Moments of Bliss" and Zoom Backgrounds to the Visit website. If you have photos you would like us to include, please send them to Lourdes at lvallin@santa-clarita.com.

Jennifer Wampler (*The Gentle Barn*) – We are currently closed to the public and have moved completely online. We are offering virtual tours and supplementary educational videos for children. It's

doing well and keeping us afloat. As a nonprofit we were pretty scared, but thanks to these lessons and videos we are still bringing in money. Everyone is working remotely, except for those that handle the animals.

Pat Downing (*Arts & Events, City of Santa Clarita*) – The MAIN is doing a virtual [10 by 10 Variety Night](#) (next one on May 7th at 7 p.m.). Right now, Arts & Events is closed until the end of May -- we don't know what June and July will look like. We are looking at the County to give us direction.

Garrett Wedel (*Communications, City of Santa Clarita*) – Right now we are focusing and highlighting local healthcare essential workers with [Hearts for Heroes](#). Many other cities have done similar things, but Santa Clarita is unique because we have a downloadable template that you can decorate. People can use #HeartsForHeroes and tag @cityofsantaclarita for a chance to be featured. You can purchase t-shirts here: <https://heartsforheroes.orderpromos.com/>). Also promoting our recycling campaign: Recycle Hero because you can still recycle from home. We are doing a weekly Facebook live with Mayor Cameron Smyth. You can see all our coronavirus-related updates at santaclaritaemergency.com.

Sahara Powell (*Hollywood Burbank Airport*) – We are taking a hit as travel has gone down, but we know that this will come to an end sooner or later. We are really counting on domestic flights. March we were down 55% and expecting April to be 98%. We're using social media to put out helpful tips and fun things like our therapy dogs. https://www.instagram.com/fly_bur/

Ben Brown (*TastePro*) – TastePro operations have been suspended because no one is doing food tours right now. We've started up *Feed the Fight* with TastePro partners and Santa Clarita Grocery, a Santa Clarita food bank, and buy meals and distribute them to at-risk seniors who can't cook for themselves: gotastepro.com/pages/feed-the-fight. I'm currently in San Diego, where I'm from, and building partnerships here to expand TastePro.

Jo Anne Hilario (*Holiday Inn Express*) – Nothing much here. We managed to get some corporate clients and we're still continuing with renovations.

Maria Christopher (*Heritage Valley Tourism Bureau*) – As you may already know, Heritage Valley is part of Ventura County. We have been adding our members that are open to our [website](#), including the honey farm and fruit stands. Things are loosening up, but we're being sensitive to the issues

Ari Larson, (*Heritage Valley Tourism Bureau*) – Check out Otto & Sons Nursery, they have some beautiful flowers right now. A lot of people are gardening right now, and this is the perfect place to get flowers – they're practicing social distancing rules.

Beth Heiserman (*Reyes Winery*) – We canceled all our events including the wine festival. We plan on doing it next year, April 10, 2021. The winery is still closed, except for delivery, pickup, and shipping.

- **Ben** – What are you guys doing with events like weddings?
- **Beth** – We've canceled three weddings this month and we're letting them pick a new date. Refunds for the festival was tough, we lost money there.

John Marquez (*Santa Paula Chamber of Commerce and Heritage Valley Tourism Bureau*) – Many people come here from Santa Clarita and many people from here go to Santa Clarita. Our museums are doing virtual tours, activity giveaways for kids – a lot of social media stuff. We're doing weekly interviews with Santa Paula Times. I'm trying to start up a marketing plan with Maria and Ari. A question I have is how can we market with a limited budget? Should we focus on social media?

- **Ben** – Yes, leverage your existing audience, refer a friend, returning customer discounts, create conversations.

- **Evan** – Social media is definitely a focus. Boosting a Facebook post really helps reach out and it can be as low as \$20-\$30. I had a call and they mentioned multifaceted co-ops with DMOs with bigger audiences. For us, we've been can do Ventura, Heritage Valley, and Santa Clarita. As we start reopening, we're happy to share Heritage Valley, you are a big resource for us.

Taylor Irving (*Embassy Suites Valencia*) – Frontline medical workers and quite a bit of nurses and doctors are staying at the hotel. Many residents that work at the senior center have been staying here too. Our restaurant and bar are closed, but we are still serving a hot breakfast which the customers really love.

Maria – Nobody from Wolf Creek is on the call, but they are still doing their charity operations. Check them out!

- **Evan** – I've been to the restaurant, they're doing curbside pickup at the restaurant and at the brewery, making people feel safe.

Danny Efron (*Hilton Garden Inn*) – We have a blood drive coming up in May. They will definitely have stricter policies. We haven't received all the information yet, but we do know that you will also have to RSVP and sign up for an appointment. They will set up booths outside and will be taking everyone's temperature. We have a video on our Facebook that we just posted, check it out! We've been getting lots of truckers and Homeland Security.

Evan – Stay safe, hopefully we can see each again soon!