



TOURISM BUREAU

Tourism Bureau Meeting Minutes
July 6, 2021, 12:00 p.m.
Hyatt Regency Valencia

ATTENDEES

Lizbeth Vargas (Best Western); Jasmine Foster (College of the Canyons); Alissa Elhelou, Desiree Wammack (Courtyard by Marriott); Billy Dye, Cassandra Finch, Memory Rudolph, Shuki Koushandeh (Embassy Suites); Maria Christopher (Rancho Camulos Museum); Ari Larson (Heritage Valley Tourism Bureau); Alfonso Barajas, Sandra Pineda (Hilton Garden Inn); Karina Winkler (Holiday Inn Express); Elizabeth Vides (Comfort Suites); Jo Anne Hilario (Holiday Inn Express and Best Western); Lawrence Barr (Homewood Suites – Hampton Inn); Lance Deutschman, Tom Clearwater (Hyatt Regency); Deputy Benjamin Sanchez (Los Angeles Sheriff's Department); Maria Christopher (Rancho Camulos); Jennifer Chadwick (Salt Creek Grille); Kris Hough (Senator Wilkes Office); Jerry Certonio, Debbie Dugger (Six Flags Magic Mountain/Hurricane Harbor); Heather Ramirez, Larry Bruyere (The Cube – City of Santa Clarita); Kayla Marquez, Evan Thomason, Marilyn Sourgose, Pat Downing, Garrett Wedel, Lourdes Vallin (City of Santa Clarita)

WELCOME

Welcome to our 1st Tourism Bureau meeting since March 2020!

Tom Clearwater, General Manager and Lance Deutschman, Director of Sales & Marketing welcomed the group: Glad you all could come to the first in-person get together. We're back full force. This weekend was jam packed. We are open completely, restaurant, events and all. We're struggling to hire people. Let us know if you know you have friends or family, that would be interested. We're happy to talk to them. We have over 10,000 sq ft. of meeting space. We are here if you have any questions.

TOURISM OFFICE UPDATES

- The Santa Clarita Tourism Bureau is made up of tourism-related business – hotels, restaurants, arts, attractions, shopping, etc.
- Our goals are to promote and market the Santa Clarita Valley as a preferred vacation and meeting destination.
- Membership and Meeting Locations
 - Suspended collecting dues from existing members in 2021. Will resume collecting membership dues in January of 2022. (No fee for TMD hotels that collect 2% assessment). Invoices will be mailed out in late December/early January. If you are on a calendar Fiscal Year and need to pay this year for budget reasons, we can provide you with an invoice now – just let us know.
 - Covers monthly lunches, special placement in Visitor Guide, on website, etc.
 - If you are not a Tourism Bureau member, you are still welcome to attend as a guest, but we will have to collect \$15 for lunch from you.
 - Meeting and mixer locations – there is a sheet going around. Let us know if you want to host, what month or months, or if you have ideas/suggestions.
- Social Media, Newsletter, Photos
 - **VISIT WEBSITE:** Working on updating the VisitSantaClarita.com website - paring it down (more visual, less wordy). Send us your good quality photos to use on the website as well as on:

- **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Lourdes schedules weekly posts – send us your events/specials to promote.
- For those that have FB, TW, Insta have staff member like/follow/share daily. Comment – engage. Help increase #s
- Reminder...when you have upcoming events or specials – let us know, send us photos and verbiage and we'll help promote on social media.
Website: VisitSantaClarita.com
Bi-weekly Visit Santa Clarita Newsletter 10,227 opt-in recipients: sign up to receive [here](#) (select Tourism Updates)
Facebook: Facebook.com/VisitSantaClarita 31,488 followers
Twitter: [@SeeSantaClarita](https://twitter.com/SeeSantaClarita) 4,507 followers
Instagram: [@visitsantaclarita](https://www.instagram.com/visitsantaclarita) 5,285 followers
- Economic Impact Study Highlights
 - Tourism in Santa Clarita Valley, finally finished. Will make it available for all of you. Thank you for those who helped.
 - Highlights: 2019 as baseline; 4.8 mil visitors; \$633M visitor revenue; 7,000 jobs available
- Front Desk Staff Training
 - Fill your staff in, with what's going on in the City, events, Old Town New hall, etc.
- 2021 Special Events List - List has been updated with events we know are happening, including sports. Now that things have opened back up and tournaments are able to take place, hotels will start seeing emails from me requesting # of hotel room nights associated with events as well as filming. Thank you in advance – helps us keep our special events list up-to-date. #s from each hotel are kept confidential. Knowing these numbers helps us with our budget.

MEMBER UPDATES

Members were asked to state their name, organization and a Santa Clarita favorite:

Tom Clearwater (Hyatt Regency Valencia) – I've been here for 11 months from Newport beach. Looking forward to exploring more.

Lance Deutschman (Hyatt Regency Valencia) – Looking forward to see more from The Cube – I'm anxious and excited about tournaments!

Patrick Downing (Arts & Events, City of Santa Clarita) – I enjoy taking the dogs to Central Park. Thank goodness the weekend is over. We had Concerts in the Park and Fourth of July, busy weekend. 5,000 people at concerts, Marathon is happening February 12, 2022 - the day before the Superbowl. LA Marathon took our usual date, then the Superbowl changed their date. This time around, all events will be on the same day.

Lawrence Barr (Homewood Suites – Hampton Inn) – I've been with Homewood for 9 months. Hopefully we'll be opening in August, after this three-year process.

Jo Anne Hilario (Holiday Inn Express & Best Western) – My favorite restaurant is Slater's 50/50 - the owner is a good friend of mine.

Elizabeth Vides (Comfort Suites) – I enjoy hiking and I am glad the fourth is over!

Karina Winkler (Holiday Inn Express) – I like trying new things and there are a lot of new restaurants in the area. We've been open for two months. It's been really busy, everything is open, all amenities are open.

Lizbeth Vargas (Best Western) – I'm working closely with Karina. We're rebranding Holiday Inn. We are the first prototype for the brand. Have lots of work to do. Happy with the trolley!

Jerry Certonio (Six Flags Magic Mountain/Hurricane Harbor) – We had a great Fourth of July weekend. We've been open since April 1. Still continuing to hire. Fright Fest announcement soon. It will be bigger than this past event. We also have Debbie back!

Debbie Dugger (Six Flags Magic Mountain/Hurricane Harbor) – A lot of roles have changed. I sent an email to some of you last Friday. I'm here and happy to chat and happy to be back!

Alfonso Barajas (Hilton Garden Inn) – We are also hiring. It's been little slow but it has been picking up. I like hiking Towsley Canyon.

Deputy Benjamin Sanchez (Los Angeles Sheriff's Department) – Been here for five years. Look over Newhall, Saugus, and Valencia. If you have any questions, I'm here. Things are getting busy. There has been a lot weird residential stuff. I'm from Palmdale, so I love the everything about the City – happy to be here.

Heather Ramirez (The Cube) – I do special events at The Cube – I've been there for a month. My favorite thing to do in Santa Clarita is cooling off at The Cube.

Larry Bruyere (The Cube) – I'm the General Manager at The Cube. We have been open since April. We have three events coming up. All of our programs are launched. I am happy to be here and glad to be up and running. We have a tournament in August with 30-40 teams coming into town.

Kris Hough (Senator Wilk's Office) – I enjoy Santa Clarita very much. I work with people that are unemployed - benefits will be cut off in September. I'm telling them to secure their job now. It's going to get more difficult and I'm doing everything I can. I also help with EDD, feel free to take my business card.

Alissa Elhelou (Courtyard by Marriott) – Happy to be out and about. Thank you, Tom, for hosting. The hotel industry never stopped, trying to get staff back on board, and back to a normal.

Desiree Wammack (Courtyard by Marriott) – Sales at Courtyard. I love going to La Cocina to have margaritas.

Jennifer Chadwick (Salt Creek Grille) – I love a nice waterfall hike. We brought back live music. We're trying to figure out what normal is. Happy hour is back, Monday - Thursday 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m – we changed the hours and is only in our bar. From 9:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m. we have live music – we might change the hours because people are coming out earlier. All of our staff came back, we're good and gearing up for the rest of the year.

Billy Dye (Embassy Suites) – Thank you, Tom, for hosting. Thank you, Sheriffs, for helping with the crazies of the last year. Its busy – Six Flags Magic Mountain is bringing in a lot of people. We're seeing a lot of corporate business, not everyone but a lot of familiar faces. Events are doing really well, people are trying to get their parties going. Its full force, which is great. Staffing is a concern, better off than we were a few months ago.

Shuki Koushandeh (Embassy Suites) – Nothing to add. I started working as Billy's assistant GM in December. I drive 100 miles to work here in Santa Clarita.

Cassandra Finch (Embassy Suites) – I'm the catering manager at Embassy. I like to hang out at the local breweries.

Beth Heisman (Zonta) – I'm not with Reyes Winery anymore, but I do have updates about the new location. The opening keeps getting changed to a later date – will most likely be in September or

October. I am working full time with Zonta. We are working on our annual film fest, which will be at Laemmle.

Maria Christopher (Rancho Camulos Museum) – I'm with Rancho Camulos, formally Rancho San Francisco. I enjoy walking on the paseos. The museum is open Sundays 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. for public tours. We are also open for events: weddings, group tours, quinceñeras. Looking forward to our first event – will know more soon.

Ari Larson (Fillmore Chamber of Commerce) – I'm a councilwoman with the Fillmore Chamber of Commerce. We are looking for opportunities to work with other tourism bureaus. The firework booths sold out, more money to our local organizations. Said goodbye to Fillmore and Western. They were in Fillmore for 25 years. We are going to miss them. The County of Ventura is looking to sign a contract with the new operators. Santa Paula is having their Downtown Citrus Music and Street Festival on July 16 and 17. There will be live music, petting zoo, and much more.

Jasmine Foster (College of the Canyons) – It's really nice to see everyone in person. Tomorrow the summer track starts. Today was the first day that staff came back to campus, but the parking lot was still pretty empty. There are still disciplines on campus. The culinary, welding and nursing students have been on campus because they need to be. Fall semester starts at the end of August, not sure how many classes will be on campus. We're just waiting and following orders. My favorite hike is nowhere.

Garrett Wedel (City of Santa Clarita) – I enjoy biking. We have expanded the City's social media presence. You can now follow us on TikTok [@CityofSantaClarita](#).

Lourdes Vallin (Tourism, City of Santa Clarita) – I am the office aide for the Tourism Office. I do our social media, website, and notes for this meeting. I enjoy going to Six Flags and trying new foods.

Marilyn – I like going to the Spiegel tent. If you haven't already, you should go see that. I love roller skating, too! Please take pictures of the places you love in Santa Clarita and share it with us!

Audra Cheney (Westfield Valencia Town Center) via email - July 24 from 6pm – 10pm: Cars Under the Stars benefitting WiSH Education Foundation: rooftop of the Macy's Parking Garage raising money to support the students in the Hart School District. Come enjoy gazing at over 100 classic cars, hot rods, and motorcycles! Vote for your favorite, listen to live music, sip on a cold beer, and snack on a warm pretzel!

July 24 & 31: Pack to School – JCI Santa Clarita School Supplies Donation: The first ever school supply drive, aims to provide backpacks, notebooks, pencils, and other supplies necessary for underserved children in the Santa Clarita Valley to be successful in school each Fall.

NEXT MEETING

Date: Tuesday, August 3 @ noon

Location: TBD