

# Mike Pearl's Notes GOVCON 2021

November 3-5, 2021

Wednesday, November 3, 2021

## Tour Colorado Meeting

Annie Sovcik, Director of "Busing on the Lookout" 410-952-0789 [asovcik@truckersagainstrafficking.org](mailto:asovcik@truckersagainstrafficking.org)

Annie Sovcik spoke about the issue of Human Trafficking – exploitation of human beings by force – and described her organization's mission.

The non-profit organization presents training programs for members of the trucking, bus, and energy industries and others on the road to watch for human trafficking.

Website: <https://truckersagainstrafficking.org/>

Peter J. Pantuso, President and CEO of The American Bus Association (ABA)

Peter J. Pantuso spoke about the importance of group travel as a means to "bring people together." Group travel generates \$15,000 per group per day. Tour operators using motorcoach transportation are Group Leaders, Banks, Church Groups and Travel Agencies.

Group travel requires pricing the excursion about 24 months ahead of the date of travel.

Group travel is a one-of-a-kind-value; group travel should not be devalued because it brings expertise and knowledge to the passenger.

## Welcome Reception

Governor Jared Polis welcomed the attendees at a reception featuring foods and activities from the Pueblo area

Thursday, November 4, 2021

## Welcome Remarks

Tim Wolfe, Director, Colorado Tourism Office

Nick Gradisar, Mayor of Pueblo

"Pueblo built the West with the steel rails coming from the Colorado Fuel & Iron Mill (CF&I) in Pueblo manufactured by the Immigrants settling around the city. CF&I manufacturers 50% of the rails used by America's railroads."

Pueblo is home to a 300 MegaWatt Solar Field.

Vesta, which makes wind energy products, is expanding its Pueblo presence.

The most-visited Colorado State Park is Pueblo Reservoir.

The newly fashioned "Riverwalk" area of downtown Pueblo follows the original course of the Arkansas River.

## Keynote Session: The Future Looks Bright: Looking Forward to 2022

Panelists: Andria Godfrey, Senior Vice President, Longwoods International; Colorado Tourism Office Team Members

The Colorado Tourism Office Team and industry experts spoke about what's ahead as we navigate the future of Colorado tourism.

The High Value travelers are international visitors who contribute \$1.6B-\$1.8B to the Colorado economy. US borders opened to international visitors November 8, 2021.

View various promotional campaigns at the following websites

[Do Colorado Right](#) [WOW Colorado Campaign](#) [Colorado.com/video\\_gallery](https://Colorado.com/video_gallery)

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## **Breakout Session** Leadership Lessons from the Class of 2020

At this wide-ranging session, members of the Colorado Tourism Leadership Journey Class of 2020 described how they made the most of their Action Learning Projects to address unmet needs in their organizations

Scott Peterson, Marketing Director Chaffee County Visitors Bureau

Colorado Rural Academy for Tourism program for residents

Austyn Dineen, Childcare and Housing Administrator, Town of Breckenridge

Brianna Schroth, Promotions & Events Manager, Ameristar Casino Resort Spa Black Hawk

Fire Mitigation in Blackhawk among residents and businesses

Amy Cassidy, President, Amy L Cassidy Consulting

Eagle Valley Trail: Signage from Vail Pass to Glenwood Springs

The take-away from these presentations is that the leader strives to create dialogue among disparate groups to develop cooperation to produce actions that benefit both the community at large and the tourism industry.

## **Keynote Session:** Ready for Takeoff: DEN's Role in Colorado's Tourism Recovery

Passenger traffic at DEN has recovered to near pre-COVID levels, and the focus has shifted to preparing for future growth. Panelists spoke about the trends that have shaped DEN's remarkable recovery, propelling the airport to rank as the fifth busiest in the world, and the key elements of Vision 100, DEN's new strategic plan and path forward to reach 100 million annual passengers.

Stacey Stegman, Senior Vice President of Communications, DEN

DEN – Largest economic driver in Colorado

2019 – DEN 69M Passengers, ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in U.S. & 16<sup>th</sup> in world

2021 – Numbers down 17% overall and 47% international; ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in U.S. and 3<sup>rd</sup> in world; behind Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson and Dallas-Ft. Worth

By 2031 – 100M Passengers

Laura Jackson, Vice President of Air Service Development, DEN

North TSA Security – Standard, TSA Pre-Check, CLEAR

South TSA Security – Standard

Be in a TSA line 2 hours before departure

## **Breakout Session** Care for Colorado — The Stewardship Balance

The steady increase in use of Colorado's spectacular outdoor resources is challenging both Rural and urban destinations more than ever. The ability to manage and mitigate impacts on resources due to increased use while still providing a quality experience for visitors and residents is a delicate balancing act. Attendees heard first-hand from the Breckenridge Tourism Office, Colorado Parks & Wildlife and Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance on how promoting the value of stewardship and increasing traveler knowledge of Leave No Trace practices can help protect the resources and build a lasting tourism economy.

Jill Corbin, Deputy Director of Destination Stewardship, Colorado Tourism Office

Content of Communication Effort

Small task leads to big reward in impact

Human behavior affects unseen wildlife

Visitors invited to "Live Like a Local"

The outdoors is NOT FREE (an idea which needs money to have influence)

Dana Watts, Executive Director, Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics

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13 B people go outside annually in U.S.

Education makes a difference on Tourism impact

Engage people in actionable behaviors (practices)

Partners amplify the education with a consistent message

Lauren Truitt, Assistant Director, Information and Education, Colorado Parks & Wildlife

Large influx of visitors to parks in 2020; leisure travelers, not business

Staff and Land still need to be managed to engage residents in "Leave No Trace" principles

Want visitors to connect with the outdoors

Lucy Kay, CEO/President, Breckenridge Tourism Office

Becky Leinweber, Executive Director, Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance

Andy Neinas, Owner, Echo Canyon River Expeditions and Royal Gorge Cabins

"As a first-line point-of-contact for the visitor, I have an obligation to communicate stewardship."

To empower the visitor with knowledge and skills

"If we don't care for this place, as people who have invited visitors, the place won't be here for future generations."

Additional Takeaways:

A plan in process to earmark a portion of the Lodging Tax (Tourism Tax) to return to the outdoors in addition to marketing

Care For Colorado Week: May 15-21, 2022

Educating visitors enhances their visit and elevates the travelers' experiences and industry

People are sustainability-minded; they like to be invited to join the sustainability journey

Treat people as "guest" not "visitors," because "guests" don't feel entitled

## Governor's Tourism Conference Awards Dinner

Attendees celebrated the achievements and excellence of the 2021 Governor's Award winners.

Friday, November 4, 2021

**Keynote Session:** "The Curiosity of Change"

**SPEAKER:** André van Hall, The Curiosity Instigator, Author of *The Curiosity of Change*

Becoming a change leader is critical, whether you are a leader or an individual contributor. But beyond simply "embracing" change, how can you instigate positive change – and quickly adapt to disruptive change? Curiosity is the key. Curiosity propels you forward. Curiosity drives you to shift your perspective, be open to change, and overcome obstacles. Curiosity leads to breakthrough thinking! André van Hall inspired attendees to adopt an attitude of curiosity: to disrupt the status quo, ask questions and seek new answers. This fuels breakthrough thinking, drives innovation and creates revolutionary results! André van Hall spoke about three types of change: Purposeful, Environmental, and Disruptive; and how to become a change leader to innovate, and to mobilize your team toward forward thinking and gain the competitive edge.

Quotes:

"Change is not the enemy, but fear."

"Rather than sit in a cesspool of emotions, take steps to deal with the situation."

"Humility – the ability to accept help; not your responsibility alone."

"Open yourself to learning from others, by being curious. Curious people learn more."

"The one who needs to change is you."

"Not where you are in life, but what you will do with it. If it is to be it is up to me."

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“Curiosity – “Gas pedal to personal growth; Intellect – “Brake to personal growth.”  
“As a leader, encourage initiative.” “Ask (listen to) team members, trust your team”  
“Don’t judge, assess.” “Change is inevitable.”

## **Breakout Session** Managing Crisis During Recovery: Lessons Learned from a Global Pandemic

The Colorado Tourism Industry continues to respond with grit and perseverance to the COVID-19 Pandemic. During this session, you can expect to learn more about how Tourism Industry Partners across Colorado demonstrated resilience by implementing Craft Recovery Mentor projects that bolstered their response during crises.

Andrew Grossman, Director of Destination Development, Colorado Tourism Office

Laura Soard, Marketing Director, Steamboat Springs Chamber

Major issues are Parking, Safety, and User Conflict

Scott Peterson, Marketing Director, Chaffee County Visitors Bureau

In meetings with stakeholders, create quick results that keep momentum going

Donna Childress, Contractor, Lake County Tourism Panel

Plan to use Lodging Tax toward housing for workers and other support for workers

To find employees, be involved in the community: “Be at the Table”

## **Keynote Session** Post-Pandemic Hiring: Connecting with a Community of Passionate Candidates

The workforce crisis is affecting every corner of our industry — from frontline, hourly positions to mid-level management and beyond. Tourism has historically battled a reputation of low-paying jobs, long hours and little upward mobility — all of which were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, while also revealing industry vulnerability, even as tourism presents many career opportunities! With millions of job openings left unfilled, it is time to rethink the root of the crisis and identify new solutions for building back the hospitality workforce — now and far into the future.

Join this group of panelists to find creative solutions to help alleviate the struggle within the post-pandemic role of hiring and retaining employees, while also giving the industry a much-needed reputational boost.

Justin Bresler, Vice President, Marketing & Business Development, VISIT Denver

Naresh Sadhnani, Hotelier & Lodging Consultant

Bruce Horii, Director of Sales & Marketing, Beaver Run Resort & Conference Center

Elizabeth Fogarty, Director, VISIT Grand Junction

General Takeaways:

Customer service is a dying art; therefore, it is a premium product

Destination Management Organizations should their members, how can the organization support you? Then listen.

## **2022 GOV CON: September 21-23 in Snowmass, CO.**

The Colorado Tourism Office offers a scholarship to help tourism professionals offset the cost of attending the conference for the first time. Check out this website: [Governor's Tourism Conference Professional Scholarship](#).