

**Minutes**  
**Island County 2% Committee**  
 December 5, 2019  
 Camp Casey Conference Center, Coupeville

The meeting was called to order at 11:04am by Vice-Chairman Chet Ross.

**Quorum:**

Debra Bell X	Comm. Jill Johnson	Pat Powell X
Dianne Binder	Gregg Lanza X	Frank Rose
Stephanie Cook	Joanne Lechner X	Chet Ross X
Miranda Hoppcock X	Jessica McCready	Sharon Sappington
Lynda Eccles	Inge Morascini X	Erica Wasinger
Bruce Allen X	Robyn Myers X	OH Vacant

In addition to the above members also in attendance this meeting were Sherrye Wyatt, Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism Coordinator, Jack Penland, ComputerPIX LLC, Scott Rosenkranz, Rosenkranz Productions and Laura Hilton, Assistant to Committee.

GUESTS: Hailey Sanford, Oak Harbor Main Street Association, Sharon Hale-Young Program Specialist, Fort Casey State Park, Clara Krathwohl, Camp Casey, Debbie Taylor, Camp Casey, Todd Morrow, Executive Director, Island Transit.

Adoption of the Agenda: Bruce motioned and Joanne seconded the motion to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes from November meeting were presented. Bruce motioned and Debra seconded the minutes be approved as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's report and invoices were presented by Dianne Binder.

<b>Island County Joint Tourism</b>					<b>Invoices on Dec. 2, 2019</b>
<b>Vendor</b>		<b>Date</b>	<b>Invoice#</b>	<b>Amt.</b>	
5009816	URSA6 – 1990935 Alberta Ltd.	11-15-19	INV-0173	\$250.00	Website Care Package
5007381	ComputerPIX LLC	11-26-19	19-22	\$2,800.43	Digital Marketing, Website
5007381	ComputerPIX LLC	11-26-19	19-23	\$357.95	Platforms, Web Expenses
	International Food Wine, and Travel Writers Association (IFWTWA)	12-1-19	591	\$255.00	Membership Dues
	Langley Chamber of Commerce	11-13-19	2017- 12586	\$1,000.00	Advertising – Back Cover of Holiday Publication
5007383	Laura Hilton	11-25-19	1119	\$1,600.00	Communications Staff Support
5007383	Laura Hilton	11-25-19	1125	\$141.60	Expenses & Mileage
5008568	Osborne Northwest Public Relations	11-27-19	2181	\$2,879.68	Monthly Contract for Media Relations Consulting and Expenses
5004220	Rosenkranz Productions	11-27-19	3012	\$1,700.88	IFWTWA Conference Expenses
5004220	Rosenkranz Productions	11-27-19	3013	\$292.89	Branded Clothing
5004220	Rosenkranz Productions	11-27-19	3014	\$1,500.00	Monthly Contract for Design Services
5005663	Sherrye Wyatt PR & Writing	11-15-19	111509	\$7,500.00	Public Relations/Marketing Services
5005663	Sherrye Wyatt PR & Writing	12-1-19	120119	\$3,697.52	Expenses & Mileage for Oct- Nov
5007176	Visit Seattle	11-20-19	3701230	\$800.00	Group Germany Promotion with Oregon & WA
	<b>Total</b>			<b>\$24,775.95</b>	

Joanne motioned and Bruce seconded the motion to approve the treasurer's report and that the invoices in the amount \$24,775.95 are authorized and submitted to Island County for payment. Motion carried by majority.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

**Management Committee report:** everything is on the agenda.

**Web site traffic,** Jack: Handout presented based on DMA West valuation of \$37.17 per new visitor.

2018- 222,678 visitors via Google = \$8.28 million

2019- 258,380 visitors via Google = \$9.60 million

Feb-Sept 2019 – 7440 referrals via book direct = \$79,827

Jack said only about 40% of islands lodging is on JackRabbit due to no response from the remaining 60% of lodgings. A plea was made for chambers to reach out to members to reinforce the need for lodgings to sign up, commission free.

### **Contract Approvals:**

Debra moved and Bruce seconded to extend the contract for Osborne Northwest Public Relations for January-December 2020. Motion carried by majority, no opposing.

Joanne moved and Debra seconded to extend the contract for Rosenkranz Productions, for January-December 2020. Motion carried by majority, no opposing.

Joanne moved and Bruce seconded to extend the contract for Sherrye Wyatt Public Relations and Writing, for January –December 2020. Motion carried by majority, no opposing.

Inge moved and Joanne seconded to extend the contract for Jack Penland ComputerPix LLC, for January –December 2020. Motion carried by majority, no opposing.

### **Monthly PR media Report**

#### **SHERRYE WYATT**

Sherrye worked with the **PORT OF SEATTLE** to continue the Spotlight Advertising at Sea-Tac Airport for the first quarter of 2020. The community who had secured it in the lottery declined, and the Port offered it to us. We will continue the same ad with no additional design or installation costs. Ad is located in baggage claim.

Working with **VISIT SEATTLE** and **TRAVEL OREGON** we partnered with 15 Washington and 15 Oregon destinations for “A Best of the Pacific Northwest” mini brochure created by one of the top producing tour operators in all of the German speaking markets: **KNECHT REISEN**.

Sherrye worked with **SAGA CITY MEDIA** to secure a space in the state’s professional meeting planner’s guide which is much improved now, translated to six languages: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, French, German and Spanish. The English language version is also used for the New Zealand/Australian markets.

Sherrye has **WASHINGTON FILMWORKS** and **WSDMO** meetings in December. In film activity, Sherrye has been invited to host a panel at the **WHIDBEY ISLAND FILM**

**FESTIVAL** and she and Laura are scouting locations with a film producer on Whidbey Island.

Sherrye met with the new executive director of the **OAK HARBOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE** Miranda Hoppock and toured Historic Pioneer Way with the new **MAIN STREET** executive director Hayley Samford.

Some of the new contracts for 2020 have been negotiated and signed with **CERTIFIED FOLDER, CASCADE LOOP, AAA JOURNEY, REAL FOOD TRAVELER, DISCOVER STANWOOD-CAMANO, SCENIC WA, ROSENKRANZ PRODUCTIONS, OSBORNE PUBLIC RELATIONS** and **SEATTLE MAGAZINE**.

## **LAURA HILTON**

### **Recap Report from Cruise Connections which Laura attended on our behalf in November:**

As of 2019 the Port of Seattle is celebrating 20 years of cruise ships, and the true explosion of growth has been just in the last five years. Since 2014 the Alaska cruise market has grown nearly 40%, and with a third cruise ship terminal soon to open in Seattle (Pier 46) that growth is likely to continue. It is estimated that each vessel call brings in \$4.2 million in regional economic impact, and there were 211 individual vessel calls in 2019!

People who cruise to Alaska are a particularly interesting market, because unlike many other popular cruise destinations, the majority of people who travel this way to Alaska have never been on a cruise before. It is considered a “bucket list” destination and many passengers are chasing a more authentic experience than simply a vacation, as with many tropical destinations. This quality seems positive for the kind of travelers we hope to attract to the islands.

According to Holland America these Alaskan cruisers are usually more active and adventurous, and it’s often entire families. We also heard from Oceania Cruises, which run smaller ships and whose passengers tend to be older, retired or semi-retired people. The most popular shore excursions with this group are culinary tours and wellness activities.

A speaker from the McDowell Group shared information from a survey of 500 passengers who’d boarded their ship in Seattle. It found that 10% of passengers travelled to other locations in Washington (based on a largely American group, it should be noted). While people booked their cruises an average of 9 months out, they only planned their Seattle area visits 3.4 months beforehand. Two thirds of guests planned their own trips based on their own research, even if the cruise itself was booked through a travel agent.

The top information sources for trip planning were the internet, followed by recommendations from friends and family. The top home states of Americans surveyed were California, Texas, Florida, and of course Washington (half of whom were from the Seattle area). The top international markets were the UK, Australia, and New Zealand.

The average age was 55, with an average household income of 117k, and 64% had attained a BA or higher.

Cruise Critic came up several times as a good source of information for what passengers are looking for, or how their experiences turned out. Placing content in international cruise-centric publications was also suggested for marketing, as well as Home Port Seattle which is the on board publication. I also learned that the Port of Seattle's rack card system is managed by Certified Folder, and that Expedia has a brick and mortar travel agency in Seattle which deals largely with cruise ship passengers.

My biggest take away was that our aim in this area should be to target that international audience. American passengers simply don't have enough time off to explore the rest of the state. The typical Alaskan cruise is a week, and so it's no surprise that the average American passenger spent only 1.5 nights in Seattle, usually before the cruise.

Whereas the international buyers event confirmed the reality I know from Australia, that people from overseas typically get more like 4-6 weeks paid leave each year. They are travelling much further to reach the starting point for their cruise, and are much more likely to spend time exploring the area before or after. For the international visitors the cruise is one part of a larger trip, but for American visitors the cruise is the trip, along with a day or so to explore Seattle.

## **OSBORNE NORTHWEST PUBLIC RELATIONS**

### **Project Management**

- Coordinated itineraries for media visits to Autumn on Whidbey; collaborated on tours that supplement shoulder season activities with the wine and art event.
- Created targeted list and pitched a calendar alert for long and short lead (Dec-May) in datebooks and travel planner roundups.
- Prepared and presented a public relations overview at the monthly tourism meeting; shared planning for 2020.
- Secured registration at International Media Marketplace in New York; will attend on behalf of Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism January.

### **Media Visits**

- Adam Callaghan, Sagacity's Washington State Tour Guide; contributor to Sip Northwest, Nov. 9-10
- Adam Sawyer, Northwest Travel, Sip Northwest; visiting to research arts and culture on the islands, Nov. 9-10.
- Coming up (just confirmed these visits and corresponding stories):
  - Travel + Leisure, April 2020 for confirmed story in Sept. 2020 print issue
  - Food & Wine, visit this winter (TBD) for confirmed story in April 2020 print issue

**Press received** (*destination articles and broadcast stories that include Whidbey or Camano as a result of our collective island efforts. Reach is defined as circulation for*

print, view/internship for broadcast, follower count for earned social media endorsements and unique monthly views for digital media).

<b>Media Outlet</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Published</b>	<b>Circulation/Unique Visitors per Month</b>
<a href="#"><u>AAA Journey - Print</u></a>	Itinerary: Greening of Coupeville	Nov. 2019	657,910
<a href="#"><u>AAA Journey - Print</u></a>	Itinerary: Lighting of Langley	Nov. 2019	657,910
<a href="#"><u>AAA Journey - Online</u></a>	Itinerary: Greening of Coupeville	Nov. 2019	5,607,990
<a href="#"><u>AAA Journey - Online</u></a>	Itinerary: Lighting of Langley	Nov. 2019	5,607,990
<a href="#"><u>Movin' 92.5 FM - Broadcast</u></a>	Auto Show Promo/Whidbey Island Giveaway	November 4-14, 2019	N/A
<a href="#"><u>Story of My Dress - Online</u></a>	A Wine Tasting Weekend on Whidbey Island	November 6, 2019	3,690
<a href="#"><u>Story of My Dress - Twitter</u></a>	Post: A Wine Tasting Weekend on Whidbey Island	November 6, 2019	2,114
<a href="#"><u>Story of My Dress - Facebook</u></a>	Post: A Wine Tasting Weekend on Whidbey Island	November 6, 2019	533
<a href="#"><u>Outside Magazine - Online</u></a>	The Best Day Hiking Near Seattle	November 14, 2019	3,801,533
<a href="#"><u>KING 5 - Online</u></a>	Mother Nature made attractions bring millions to the outdoors - 2019's Best	November 18, 2019	3,160,175
<a href="#"><u>Great Northwest Wine - Online</u></a>	Red Wine and Chocolate by Whidbey Island Vintners	November 20, 2019	28,347
<a href="#"><u>Great Northwest Wine - Online</u></a>	Savor Spring Food, Wine and Spirits Tour by Whidbey Island Vintners	November 20, 2019	28,347
<a href="#"><u>Great Northwest Wine - Online</u></a>	Autumn on Whidbey Art, Wine & Spirits Tour	November 20, 2019	28,347
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>19,646,948</b>

## **JACK PENLAND - COMPUTERPIX**

### **Video**

Here's a link to the video that I was going to show at the previous meeting. A big "Thank-You" to those who supplied the video (I was just the editor).

<https://whidbeycamanoislands.com/whale-watching-will-leave-you-speechless/>

### **Website**

- Created a special holiday page (thanks to Laura Hilton for getting things started). <https://whidbeycamanoislands.com/holiday-events-performances-and-shopping-2019/>
- I also entered those events and many more in our calendar. I haven't said it in a while, but it's important to note that we try, at least for the major events, to offer as much information as possible, often more information than the event's own

website.

We do this so as to try to get the website in front of as many eyeballs as possible.

- There's a new blog post, "Throwback Holidays for Making Memories:"  
<https://whidbeycamanoislands.com/throwback-holidays-for-making-memories/>
- Started the new contest:  
<https://whidbeycamanoislands.com/enter-to-win-an-escape-to-a-camano-island-cabin/>
- Special attention to all the December 7 events on the calendar:  
<https://whidbeycamanoislands.com/calendar/>

### Email:

The latest newsletter is online at:

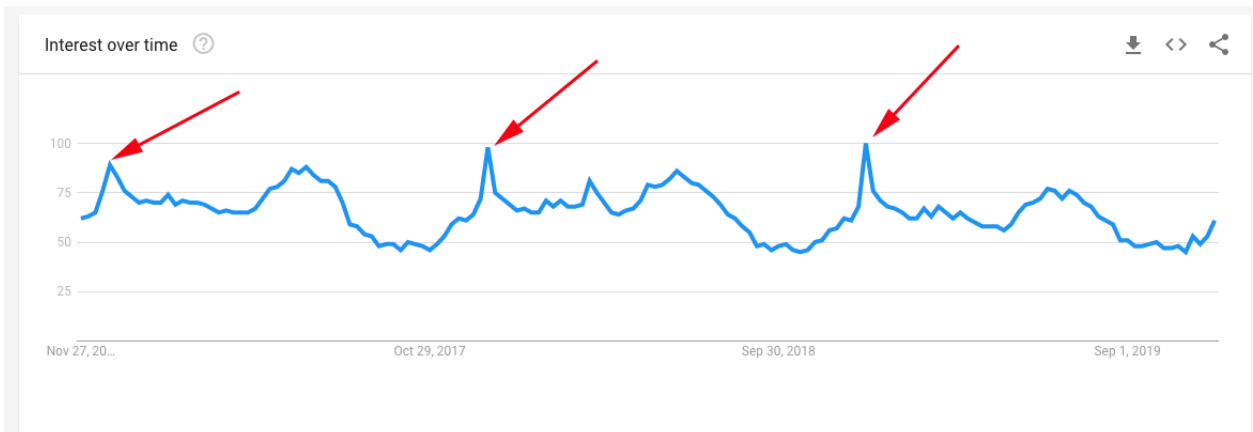
[https://us12.campaign-archive.com/?u=11380ced8373e34392577e79b&id=eede6cdb92&e=\[UNIQID\]](https://us12.campaign-archive.com/?u=11380ced8373e34392577e79b&id=eede6cdb92&e=[UNIQID])

It had 18.9% opens and 4.9% clicks on links in the newsletter. Top clicks were the contest (1312 clicks) and the above-noted blog post (271 clicks).

### When do People Start Thinking about Vacations?

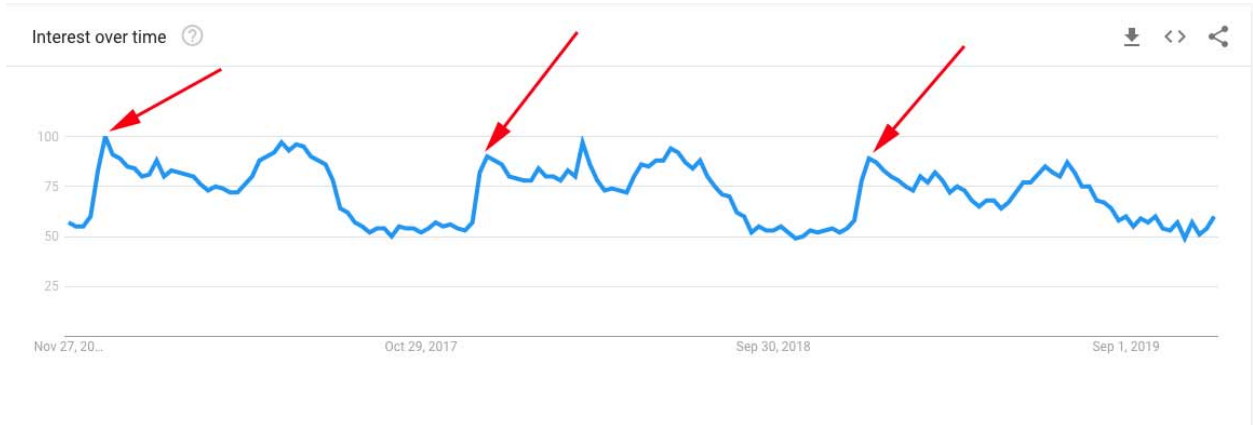
The answer might surprise you, but according to Google, the peak time people in the United States search using the word "vacation" is the week between Christmas and New Year's. The arrows in the charts on the next page point to that week in 2016, 2017, and 2018.

It's also interesting to see how quickly it ramps up, then again back down. It almost feels like a New Year's resolution moment.



But, these are for all kinds of searches, movie titles, real estate, whatever. What about if we filter for only travel related searches that use the word "vacation." The arrows in this next chart, like before, point to the period between Christmas and New Year's.

The surge in interest is *very* visible. There's something of a drop after that week, but the interest level remains much higher than in the fall and early winter.



The DMO marketing take-away from this is that showtime begins as soon as the presents are unwrapped. If you wait until spring to unveil new content, you're likely going to miss a significant opportunity to reach an audience that is interested in what you have to say.

### **Fall on Whidbey Contest**

We had 3808 entries in our latest newsletter contest. Here's how they said they heard about it.

A Friend	225
Cascade Loop Email	100
Our email	1216
Facebook	284
Instagram	5
Other	111
ScenicWa Email	133
The Website	1724
Twitter	9

### **ROSENKRANZ PRODUCTIONS**

Scott gave an update to on his trip to Santa Fe with the travel writer's conference. He also gave a presentation on the branded merchandise is available representing Whidbey and Camano Islands.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 12:56 PM

Next regular meeting is January 2, 2020 at Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce.

Meeting recorded by Robyn Myers, Secretary and reviewed by Joanne Lechner, Alternate Secretary.