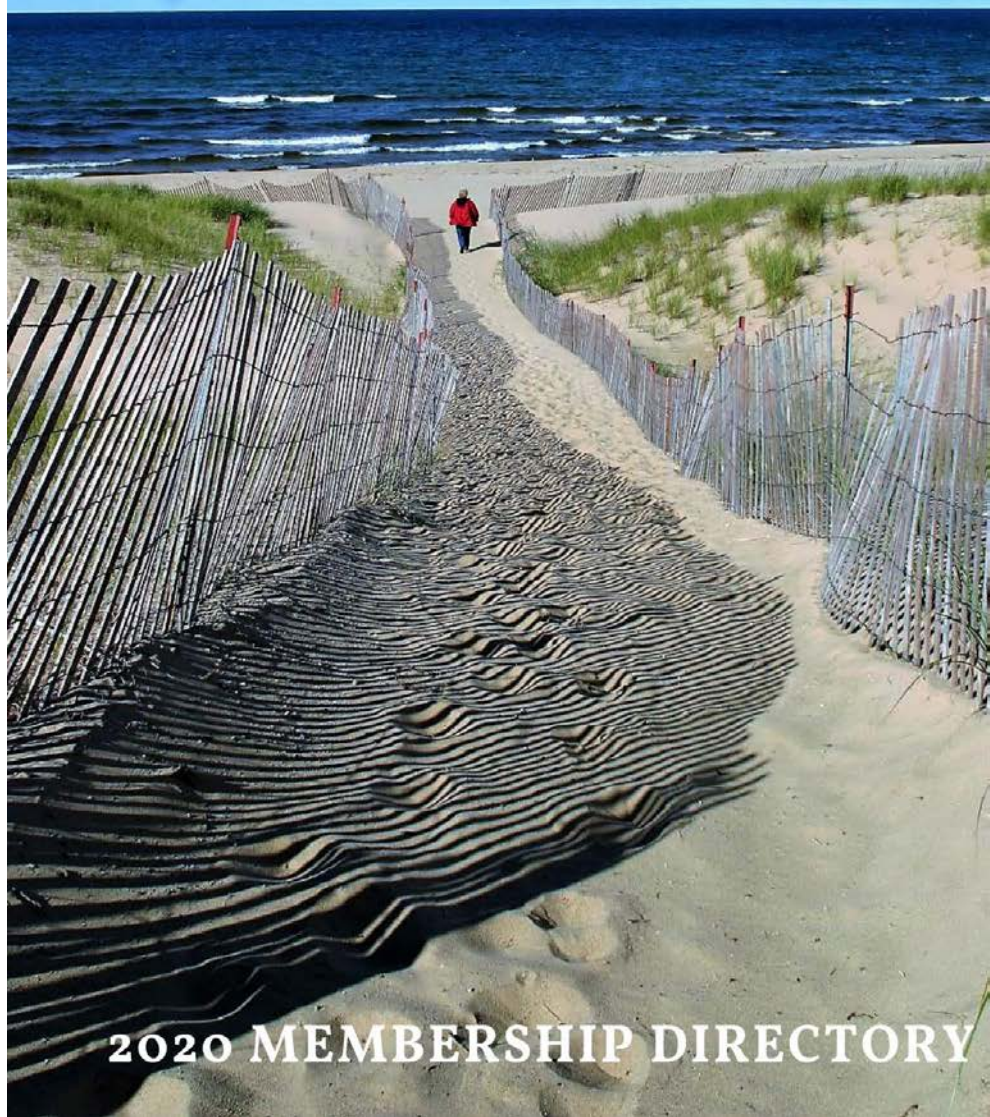




Midwest Travel Journalists Association, Inc.



2020 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY



Photo: A photographer captures the sunrise over Lake Michigan at the North Pierhead Lighthouse near the entrance to the Sturgeon Bay Ship Canal in Door County. Photo courtesy Shine On Photos, LLC.

**Your contact for all things Door County:**  
**Jon Jarosh, Director of Communications & PR**  
**jon@doorcounty.com or 920-818-1133**  
**www.DoorCounty.com**





### **OUR PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the Midwest Travel Journalists Association, Inc. is to protect and upgrade travel writing as a profession by exchanging ideas, encouraging high professional ideals, fostering communications between travel writers and readers, and championing the cause of travelers from the Midwest.

### **ABOUT US:**

Midwest Travel Journalists Association, Inc. was organized in Wisconsin in 2017. MTJA members live and are based in 13 Midwest states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

### **OUR MEMBERSHIP:**

Midwest Travel Journalists Association is an organization of travel professionals which includes:

- a) Active Members: journalists who are writers, editors, photographers, bloggers, and broadcasters who report and comment on travel and tourism.
- b) Associate Members and Alternate Associate Members: professional public relations staff in the field of travel and tourism.

## **MESSAGE FROM GARY KNOWLES, MTJA PRESIDENT**

Greetings from the Midwest Travel Journalists Association Inc.

We are delighted that you have discovered our organization and hope you will use this directory often. It can help you connect with some of the world's finest professional travel journalists and travel industry representatives.

The Midwest Travel Journalists Association Inc. (MTJA) is one of the newest professional travel journalist's organizations in the United States. We were founded in 2017 by a group of seasoned, well-traveled, and award-winning professional travel journalists based in thirteen Midwest states. Our roots are proudly and firmly planted in print journalism, guidebooks, radio and TV. Many of our accomplished members have belonged to traditional, prestigious travel writer organizations like the Midwest Travel Writers Association or the Society of American Travel Writers. In forming MTJA we have enthusiastically affirmed our traditions while extending the reach of our reports by embracing opportunities in new and rapidly emerging communication channels including blogs, pod-casts, on-line and social media.

Our membership is limited to travel journalists ("active members") and public relations professionals ("associate members") living in the Midwest states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. We call the Midwest "home" but you'll find us travelling to every nook and cranny on this planet.

The purpose of our association is to protect and upgrade travel journalism as a profession by exchanging ideas, encouraging high professional ideals, offering travel opportunities, and preserving and improving communication between travel journalists and consumers.

MTJA Inc. is one of a very few travel journalist associations that reviews member's work annually. We require that active members are paid, professional, and that their published reports and images reach audiences of significant size. Our associate members represent the official state travel offices in our thirteen-state territory, major travel destinations, travel carriers, cruise lines, and important travel industry businesses

You'll find our members serving as guest speakers in seminars, conferences, and often being interviewed by other media. We enjoy sharing our experiences, travel stories, photographs, videos, films, professional advice, getaway suggestions and observations.

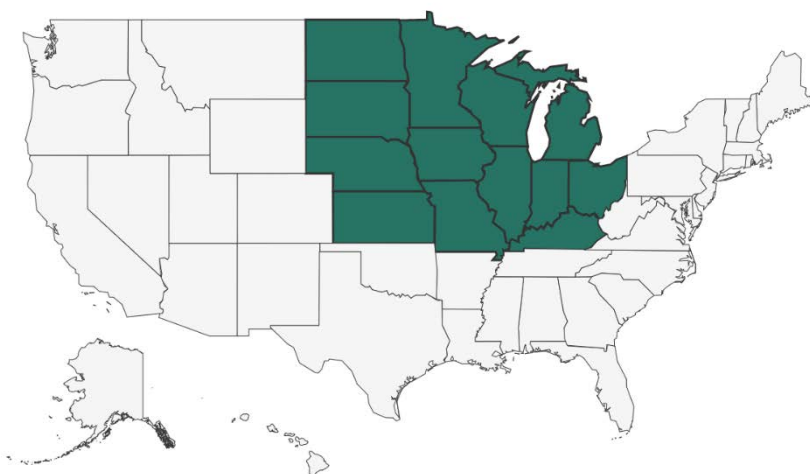
Whether you're a travel journalist looking to meet and share ideas with other experienced professionals, a representative of a great destination eager to welcome new guests, a conference planner looking for a professional traveler to share tips, or a reporter seeking insider's opinions on travel trends, you're holding a valuable resource in your hands. The person you're searching for is likely just a few pages away!

We're looking forward to working with you. Happy travels!

Gary Knowles  
President- MTJA Inc.

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*Midwest Travel Journalists Association members are in a thirteen-state territory. Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin.*



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### Cover Photo:

Lake Superior near Au Train, Michigan – along M-28  
Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Granger

# 3 Great Destinations in Central Missouri



*Lake of the Ozarks, Mo. was named the "Best Recreational Lake in the Nation!"*



*Margo Price and John Prine headlined the Roots n Blues n BBQ Festival in Columbia, Mo.*



*Winston Churchill made history in Fulton, Mo. when he delivered his "Iron Curtain" speech in 1946.*

**We'd love to host you! Let's start planning your customized press trip to Lake of the Ozarks, Columbia and Fulton. Contact Marjorie Beenders at [Marjorie@TBWGroup.net](mailto:Marjorie@TBWGroup.net) or by calling 573-636-8282.**

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



President  
Gary Knowles (2018-2020)



Active Vice President  
Amy Lynch (2018-2021)



Associate Vice President  
Jessica O'Riley (2018-2021)



Secretary  
Alan Carr (2018-2020)



Treasurer  
David Hoekman (2018-2021)



Active Director  
Melinda Schnyder (2019-2021)



Active Director  
Kathy Rodeghier (2018-2020)



Associate Director  
Marjorie Beenders (2017-2020)



Past President  
Amy Eckert (Non-voting, ex-officio)

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS & COORDINATORS

### **Clips/Scrapbook**

Melinda Schnyder

### **Facebook**

Jessica O'Riley

### **Mark Twain Awards**

Jessica Waytenick

### **Media Marketplace**

Toni Alexander

### **Membership Renewal Review**

Mary Bergin

### **New Member**

### **Welcome/Orientation**

Mike Whye

### **Nominating**

Mary Bergin

### **Retired-Emeritus Group**

Mary Bergin

### **State Membership**

Marjorie Beenders

### **Ethics**

Gary Knowles

### **GEMmy Awards**

Elizabeth Granger

### **Mary Ethel's Basket**

Diana Lambdin Meyer

### **Membership Applications**

Amy Eckert

### **MTJA Players**

Mary Quinley

### **Newsletter**

Terri Peterson Smith

### **Professional Development**

Amy Lynch

### **Sites Director**

Amy Weirick

### **Website**

Amy Lynch

## MARK TWAIN AWARDS

The Mark Twain Awards are presented annually for excellence in travel writing. Established in 1955 by the former Midwest Travel Writers Association, the competition is now maintained by the Midwest Travel Journalists Association, Inc. and is open to Active members of MTJA. Awards are presented in multiple categories:

### Mark Twain Travel Journalist of the Year 2019

#### 2019 Lisa Meyers McClintock

##### 1<sup>st</sup> Place Mark Twain Award Winners

Culinary Articles:  
Diana Lambdin Meyer

Digital Articles:  
Jackie Sheckler Finch

Magazine Articles Domestic:  
Rich Warren

Magazine Articles  
International:  
Rich Warren

Midwest Destinations:  
Mary Bergin

Newspaper Articles Domestic:  
Lisa Meyers McClintock

Newspaper Articles  
International:  
Mary Bergin

Photojournalism:  
Lisa Meyers McClintock

Recent Conference Sites:  
Jackie Sheckler Finch

Short Copy:  
Paris Wolfe

Travel Blog:  
Jody Halsted

Books:  
Lori Erickson

#### Lisa Meyers McClintock for “Olympic’s Colossal Forests”



2019 Contest Sponsors:



## TRAVEL JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR AWARD

Each year, the contest judge bestows the **Travel Journalist of the Year** honor to one Active whose work stands out among the rest. Formerly known as the Mark Twain Travel Writer of the Year, the new title for this award reflects MTJA's view that travel journalism today extends into media venues beyond the printed page.

|                     |                        |                       |
|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
|                     | 2019                   | 2018                  |
|                     | Lisa Meyers McClintick | Diana Lambdin Meyer   |
| 2017                | 2016                   | 2015                  |
| Todd Wessell        | Janet Podolak          | Diana Lambdin Meyer   |
| 2014                | 2013                   | 2012                  |
| Randy Mink          | Rich Warren            | Jackie Sheckler Finch |
| 2011                | 2010                   | 2009                  |
| Kim Schneider       | Kim Schneider          | Carla Waldemar        |
| 2008                | 2007                   | 2006                  |
| Carla Waldemar      | Diana Lambdin Meyer    | Jackie Sheckler Finch |
| 2005                | 2004                   | 2003                  |
| Carla Waldemar      | Rachel Reynolds-Soucie | Jackie Sheckler Finch |
| 2002                | 2001                   | 2000                  |
| Betsa Marsh         | Jackie Sheckler Finch  | Betsa Marsh           |
| 1999                | 1998                   | 1997                  |
| Ann Hattes          | Jackie Sheckler Finch  | Mike Michaelson       |
| 1996                | 1995                   | 1994                  |
| Betsa Marsh         | Susan R. Pollack       | John Whitman          |
| 1993                | 1992                   | 1991                  |
| Leonard R. Barnes   | Sharon Lloyd Spence    | Joy Schaleben Lewis   |
| 1990                | 1989                   | 1988                  |
| Joy Schaleben Lewis | Susan Bayer Ward       | Dixie Franklin        |
| 1987                | 1986                   | 1985                  |
| Leonard R. Barnes   | Frederick Karst        | Leonard R. Barnes     |
| 1984                | 1983                   | 1982                  |
| Iris S. Jones       | Leonard R. Barnes      | Rick Sylvain          |
| 1981                | 1980                   | 1979                  |
| Janet Steinberg     | Iris S. Jones          | Leonard R. Barnes     |
| 1978                | 1977-1971              | 1970                  |
| Iris S. Jones       | No Awards              | Henry Bradshaw        |
| 1969                | 1968                   | 1967                  |
| Richard Dunlop      | Richard Dunlop         | Bill Hibbard          |
| 1966                | 1965                   | 1964                  |
| No Award            | Leonard R. Barnes      | William J. Trepagnier |
| 1963                | 1962                   | 1961                  |
| No Award            | Lucia Lewis            | Kermit Holt           |
| 1960                | 1959                   | 1958                  |
| Lucia Lewis         | William J. Trepagnier  | Paul M. McMahon       |
| 1957                | 1956                   | 1955                  |
| William Yates       | Dave Roberts           | Lucia Lewis           |

## **GEMmy AWARDS**

GEMmy Awards alert travelers to outstanding and exceptional attractions, sites, events, accommodations, restaurants, drives, walks or excursions that they might overlook. MTJA, Inc. considers these awards an important service to travelers and is pleased to continue the original awards program started by the Midwest Travel Writers Association. These awards are presented to "travel gems" that help make traveling such a rich, rewarding and memorable experience.

### **2019**

David J. Sencer CDC Museum  
Atlanta, GA  
Destination Kohler  
Kohler, WI  
Gothic Milwaukee  
Milwaukee, WI  
Grohmann Museum  
Milwaukee, WI  
La Casa del Carnaval  
Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain  
Levi & Catharine Coffin State  
Historic Site  
Fountain City, IN  
National Churchill Museum  
Fulton, MO  
Pretentious Beer  
Company/Pretentious Glass  
Company  
Knoxville, TN  
Songbirds  
Chattanooga, TN  
Urban Ecology Center  
Milwaukee, WI

### **2018**

Acadian Village  
Lafayette, LA  
Artisan Forge Studios  
Eau Claire, WI  
Campbell House Museum  
St. Louis, MO  
Columbus Architecture Tour  
Columbus, IN  
Detroit Experience Factory  
Detroit, MI

Inn at Cedar Falls  
Logan, OH  
Josephine Sculpture Park  
Frankfort, KY  
Kentucky Knows  
Frankfort, KY  
Martin Accordion Shop  
Scott, LA  
Mendelssohn Haus  
Leipzig, Germany  
Negro Leagues Baseball  
Museum  
Kansas City, MO  
Seneca Art and Culture Center  
Canandaigua, NY  
Old Friends Thoroughbred  
Retirement Farms  
Georgetown, KY

### **2016**

Museum Ship Valley Camp  
Sault Ste. Marie, MI  
The Getaway Inn at Cooper's  
Woods  
Put-in-Bay, OH  
The Liberty Aviation Museum  
Port Clinton, OH

### **2015**

Coaster II  
Marquette, MI  
Indiana Historical  
Society/Indiana History Center  
Indianapolis, IN

## **2014**

Belle of Louisville  
Louisville, KY  
International Photography Hall  
of Fame and Museum  
St. Louis, MO  
Thomas Hart Benton Home and  
Studio State Historic Site  
Kansas City, MO  
T.C. Steele State Historic Site  
Nashville, IN

## **2009**

John Michael Kohler Arts Center  
Sheboygan, WI  
Kwahadi Dancers at the  
Museum of the American Indian  
Amarillo, TX

## **2008**

Hands-On Art Studio  
Fish Creek, WI  
Morse Museum  
Winter Park, FL  
St. Julien Hotel & Spa  
Boulder, CO

## **2007**

Big Top Chautauqua  
Bayfield, MI  
Traders Point Creamery  
Zionsville, IN

## **2006**

Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum  
Paradise, MI  
Old Louisville Ghost Tours  
Louisville, KY  
Prairie Rose Chuckwagon  
Supper  
Benton, KS  
Spirited Garden  
Jejudo, Korea

## **2005**

A World of Accordions Museum  
Superior, WI

Bayfield Heritage Tours  
Bayfield, WI

## **2004**

Brownsville, NE  
California State Railroad  
Museum  
Sacramento, CA  
Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park  
Mandan, ND  
Mandan Drug  
Mandan, ND  
Motown Museum  
Detroit, MI  
National Cowboy Hall of Fame  
& Western Heritage Museum  
Oklahoma City, OK  
Renfro Valley, KY

## **2003**

Farmington Valley, CT  
Foynes Flying Boat Museum  
Foynes, Ireland  
Irish National Potato Famine  
Museum  
Strokestown, Ireland  
Scala's Restaurant  
Sonoma County, CA

## **2002**

Aunt Eunice's  
Huntsville, AL  
Chocolate Mayordomo  
Oaxaca, Mexico  
Hotel Hacienda los Laureles  
Oaxaca, Mexico  
Prairie Museum of Art & History  
Colby, KS  
Seelye Mansion  
Abilene, KS  
University of Okoboji, IA

## **2001**

Fort Scott, KS  
Frederick Meijer Gardens  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Granville Island Museums

Vancouver, BC, Canada  
The Rocky Mountaineer  
BC & Alta, Canada

## **2000**

Aerie Resort and Restaurant  
Victoria, BC, Canada  
Banff Centre, Banff  
Alta, Canada  
Beluga Interaction Program  
San Antonio, TX  
HH Bennett Studio  
Wisconsin Dells, WI  
Spirits of San Antonio Tour  
San Antonio, TX

## **1999**

Little Norway  
Blue Mounds, WI  
The Fireside  
Fort Atkinson, WI  
Strategic Air Command Museum  
Ashland, NE  
Wisconsin Veterans Museum  
Madison, WI

## **1998**

Mendocino Coast  
Botanical Gardens, CA

## **1997**

Bata Show Museum  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
Living History Farms  
Urbandale, IA  
The Lincoln Museum  
Fort Wayne, IN  
Ottawa & Canada's Capital  
Region, Ottawa  
Ontario, Canada  
Steamboat Arabia Museum  
Kansas City, MO  
Toy & Miniature Museum  
Kansas City, MO

## **1996**

Columbus Indiana Visitor Center

Columbus, IN  
Fantasy of Flight  
Polk City, FL  
Indiana Medical History Museum  
Indianapolis, IN

## **1995**

Breitbart's Country Dining  
Balltown, IA  
DC Booth Historic Fish Hatchery  
Spearfish, SD  
Hotel Alex Johnson  
Rapid City, SD  
Prairie Edge Trading Co  
Rapid City, SD  
Reptile Gardens  
Rapid City, SD  
Waldo County, Maine  
Waldo, ME  
Wilton Candy Kitchen  
Wilton, IA

## **1994**

EAA Air Adventure Museum  
Oshkosh, WI  
Fox Cities Children's Museum  
Appleton, WI  
Heritage Hill Living History  
Museum  
Green Bay, WI

## **1993**

Amerind Foundation  
Dragoon, AZ  
Hidden Valley Inn  
Tucson, AZ  
Langdon Hall, Cambridge  
Ontario, Canada  
Southmoreland on the Plaza Inn  
Kansas City, MO

## **1992**

Forest View Gardens  
Cincinnati, OH  
Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art  
Salisbury, MD

## **SPOTLIGHT AWARDS**

Originated by the Midwest Travel Writers Association, the Spotlight Awards recognize exceptional campaigns and promotions by Associate members who focus attention on travel businesses, services, events, facilities or openings. Emphasis is placed on outstanding works that deserve notice, brought client success and have ultimately helped travelers find and enjoy extraordinary travel experiences.

### **2017**

Amy Weirick

### **2011**

Jeannine Sherman

### **2008**

Jen Schmits Thomas

### **2007**

Gary Knowles

### **2006**

Joan Collins  
Gary Knowles  
Jen Schmits Thomas

### **2005**

Jean Freidl

### **2003**

Wendy Haase  
Beverly Hurley

### **2004**

Beverly Hurley

### **2001**

Beverly Hurley

## **MTJA MEETING SITES**

### **2020**

Holland America Cruise  
San Diego to Vancouver BC April 27 – May 2

### **2019**

Wichita, Kansas, Sept. 10 – 14  
Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, May 8 – 12

### **2018**

Atlanta's DeKalb County, Georgia, Oct. 31 - Nov. 4  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Apr. 11 to 15

### **2017**

Lafayette, Louisiana, Oct. 11 to 15  
Frankfort, Kentucky, May 17 to 21



# Making Waves IN ST. LOUIS

Looking for a destination within a destination? St. Louis Union Station combines luxury hotel rooms and expansive conference space with several new exciting attractions and various dining options. The St. Louis Aquarium at Union Station, which features 13,000 animals, recently opened to rave reviews. The St. Louis Wheel (a 200-foot high observation wheel with 42 climate-controlled gondolas) offers amazing views of the St. Louis skyline. Other new attractions include a ropes course, mirror maze and mini golf course.

To learn more about St. Louis Union Station and all the happenings in St. Louis, contact Tony Paraino at 314.992.0654 or [aparaino@explorestlouis.com](mailto:aparaino@explorestlouis.com).

[www.explorestlouis.com](http://www.explorestlouis.com)



## **TRADITIONS**

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### **Mary Ethel's Basket**

Mary Ethel Emmanuel represented the State of Nebraska as a Midwest Travel Writers Association Associate member from 1991 to 2006. She served on the board and in numerous volunteer positions over the years. Her wildly curly hair and infectious laugh were a constant presence at every meeting. Nebraska's first winery opened in 2002, which coincided with the fall meeting in Sonoma County, California. Not one to be intimidated by the great California wine region, Mary Ethel suggested that instead of giving our hosts a silver plate in appreciation for their work on behalf of our organization, all members bring a little gift representing their individual communities in the Midwest. Mary Ethel wanted to show off Nebraska wine.

Until her death in 2006 at the age of 54, Mary Ethel coordinated these gift baskets of appreciation, which are now named in her honor.

Midwest Travel Journalists Association, Inc. proudly continues this fine tradition by presenting Mary Ethel's Basket to destination hosts during the closing night ceremony at each conference.

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### **MTJA Players**

In the fall of 2008, a handful of Midwest Travel Writers Association members gathered poolside at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort in Orlando, Florida. Their challenge: how to thank the destination for hosting the organization's conference. As a result of that meeting, the MTWA Players, a talented crew of performers, was created. The tradition continues with the MTJA Players. On the final evening of the conference, the Players present a fun-filled skit of appreciation.

# UMGÅS

Swedish, verb

1. to socialize. to spend time together.

Experience umgåås for  
yourself in Eau Claire.

A photograph of a man and a woman sitting at a bar. The man, on the left, is wearing a white button-down shirt and grey trousers, and is pouring beer from a pitcher into a glass. The woman, on the right, is wearing a grey sweater, blue jeans, and brown boots, and is sitting on a red stool. A large brown dog is standing in the foreground. The background shows a bar with various bottles and a fan.

**VISIT EAU CLAIRE**  
[VisitEauClaire.com](http://VisitEauClaire.com)

## MEMBERSHIP

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There are two categories of MTJA membership, Active and Associate. An applicant's category of membership must accurately reflect the person's source of professional travel-related income and ethical allegiance. No member shall hold both Active and Associate memberships.

**Active Members** are on-staff and independent editors, writers, bloggers, and photojournalists residing in the Association's membership area who earn their income from the creation of travel-related editorial content for newspapers, magazines, books, blogs, websites, radio or television. Excluded work includes advertorials and copy for promotional brochures, (i.e., content that is paid for and approved by advertisers or sponsoring organizations).

**Associate Members** reside in the Association's membership area and are engaged primarily in public relations within the travel industry and have worked regularly with the travel media for a minimum of one year. Marketing and public relations staff of single-location attractions are not eligible for membership.

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## CODE OF ETHICS

Members of MTJA adhere to the highest standards in the profession of journalism. In accepting and continuing in membership, each member agrees to abide by the Code of Professional Responsibility.

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*Directory Note:*

*the (\*) by the member name indicates they were a previous member of MTWA.*

## ACTIVE MEMBERS

### Ammeson, Jane (2017) \*

Freelancer

4150 Ridge Road, #32, Stevensville, MI 49127

Cell: (269) 325-9009 | Email: [janeammeson@gmail.com](mailto:janeammeson@gmail.com)

Instagram: @janeammeson | Twitter: @travelfoodIN | Travel

Blog: <https://janeammeson.blog>

#### Media Outlets:

Kentucky Living, Times of Northwest Indiana, Herald Palladium, Lakeland Boating, Travel Indiana, Indiana University Press, Long Weekends Magazine, Edible Michiana, Indianapolis Monthly, Experience Michigan

**Specialties:** Bed & Breakfasts, Budget, Cruising, Culture & History, Events, Family Getaways, Food & Wine, General Destination, Green Travel, Group Tours, Luxury, Outdoor, Quirky, Senior (50+), Women's Travel, Architecture

#### Books:

*How to Murder Your Wealthy Lovers and Get Away with It: Money & Mayhem in the Gilded Age*, June 2018, Indiana University Press

*Lincoln Road Trip: The Back-Roads Guide to America's Favorite President*, April 2019, Indiana University Press

*Murders that Made Headlines: Crimes of Indiana*, August 2017, Indiana University Press

*Hauntings of the Underground Railroad: Ghosts of the Midwest*, 2017, Indiana University Press

*A Jazz Age Murder in Northwest*, 2015, Indiana History Press

**Resources & Talents:** Interview Guest: Road Trips/Historic Travel/Architecture/Food/Spirits/Wine; Stock Photos: Spain/Michigan/Indiana/Arizona/Mexico/Germany/Castles/Seine/Paris/Amsterdam/The Rhine/Quebec/Quebec City/Montreal/Prince Edwards Island/Halifax/Ohio/Chicago/Kentucky; Guest Speaker: Historical Research, Writing True Crimes

**Bergin, Mary (2017) \***

Writer/Photographer

Midwest Features Syndicate

P.O. Box 259623, Madison, WI 53725

Office/Cell: 608-274-8925 | Email: [info@roadstraveled.com](mailto:info@roadstraveled.com)

Facebook: [@roadstravled](#), [@supperclubcookbook](#) | Instagram:

[@maryinmadisonwis](#) | Twitter: [@maryinmadison](#) | Website:

[www.marybergin.com](http://www.marybergin.com) | Travel Blog: [www.roadstraveled.com](http://www.roadstraveled.com)

**Media Outlets:**

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Chicago Tribune, USA Today

Network, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Experience Wisconsin,

TravelAge West, The Restaurateur, TravelWisconsin.com,

GroupTour.com, Wisconsin Meetings

**Specialties:** Budget, Food & Wine, General Destination, Green Travel, Quirky, Senior 50+, Midwest US

**Books:**

*Wisconsin Supper Club Cookbook*, 2015, Globe Pequot Press

*Dorling Kindersley Eyewitness Guide to the US (Midwest/Plains section)*, 2015, Penguin Random House

*Eat Smart in Germany*, 2013 Ginkgo Press

**Resources/Talents:** Stock Photography, especially Midwest U.S. and Germany

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** 2018 Lowell Thomas silver, environmental tourism; 2015 Lowell Thomas gold, short copy; 2019 Mark Twain gold, international destinations, newspapers; 2019/2018 Mark Twain gold, Midwest destinations; 2018 SATW Central States gold, travel blog, domestic destinations.

**MTJA Offices held:** Membership Renewal Chair, Retired-Emeritus Chair, Nominating Chair

## **Bernardi, Kit (2020)**

Travel Journalist / Photographer / Marketer

912 N. Euclid Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60302

Office/Cell: 312-848-5888 | Email: Kit@KitTravels.com

Instagram: @KitBernardi | Website: www.KitTravels.com

### **Media Outlets:**

USA TODAY, South China Morning Post Magazine, CruiseCritic.com, Westways Magazine, MtnScoop.com, U.S. News & World Report, CNN Travel, Delta Sky Magazine, Travel Illinois Magazine, Midwest Living Magazine, FamilyTravelForum.com, AAA Publications, Hemispheres

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Culinary, Family, Culture & History, Luxury Travel, Architecture, Art, Golf, Spa, Shopping, Attractions, Events, Quirky, Senior (50+), Shopping, Women's Travel

**Resources/Talents:** Photography, Public Speaker, Teaches Travel Journalism

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Society of American Travel Writers Central States Chapter 2019 Awards for International Magazine Story and Food Photo; 2018 U.S. Travel Association & Brand USA Travel Writer IPW Domestic Article Winner; 2017 TravMedia Journalist of the Year.

## **Corbett, Suzanne (2017) \***

Freelance Food & Travel Writer

13702 Minnette CT, St. Louis, MO 63128

Office/Cell: (314) 749-9596

Email: suzannecorbett@me.com

Instagram: @corbett\_suzanne | Twitter: @Suzanne\_Corbett

### **Media Outlets:**

Gazelle Magazine, West News Magazine, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, AAA Southern Traveler, AAA Midwest Traveler, AAA World, Tour/ST Magazine, Mid-Rivers News Magazine, STLsportsPage.com, RealFoodTraveler.com

**Specialties:** Cruises, Culture and History, Family Getaways, Food & Wine, LGBT, Quirky, Shopping, Women's Travel

### **Books:**

*Unique Eats & Eateries of St. Louis,*  
2017, Reedy Press

*The Gilded Table,* 2015,  
Donning Press

**Resources & Talents:** Food Historian, Guest Speaker, Culinary Teacher, Foodways Interpreter

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** NATJA Gold, Silver, Bronze & Finalist 2014-2019; National Federation of Press Women/Missouri First Place Awards 2013-2019 Mark Twain Awards – First place, Second & Third place 2016-2019; President's Award, St. Louis Press Club; Communicator of the Year, Missouri Professional Communicators, James Beard Journalism Awards; Judge 2016, 2017 & 2019

**Eckert, Amy S. (2017) \***

Freelance Writer

PO Box 1736, Holland, MI 49422

Cell: (616) 260-1639

Email: amy@amyeckert.com | <https://amyeckert.com/>

**Media Outlets:**

National Geographic Traveler, Delta Sky, afar.com, AARP, Chicago Tribune, AAA Living, Hemispheres, Backpacker, Michigan.org, LongWeekends

**Books:**

*Easy Detroit Outdoors*, 2018,  
Reedy Press

*100 Things to Do in Detroit  
before You Die*, 2nd ed., 2018,  
Reedy Press

*100 Things to Do in Detroit  
before You Die*, 2016, Reedy  
Press

*Cuba*, 3rd edition, 2015, Fodor's

**Resources & Talents:** Public Speaker, "How to Travel like a Travel Writer," "Multigenerational Travel," Detroit-themed travel topics

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** TravMedia Journalist of the Year (2019)

**MTJA Offices held:** Past President, New Members Chair

**Erickson, Lori (2017) \***

Freelance Writer

222 Fairview Avenue, Iowa City, IA 52245

Website: [www.lorierickson.net](http://www.lorierickson.net) | Twitter: @HolyRover | Travel

Blog: [www.spiritualtravels.info](http://www.spiritualtravels.info)

**Media Outlets:**

Los Angeles Times, USA Today, Toronto Globe & Mail, Next Avenue, AAA Living, Cedar Rapids Gazette, Christian Century Magazine, Light of Consciousness Magazine, Group Tour Magazine

**Specialties:** Culture & History, General Destination, Senior (50+), Spiritual/Religious Travel

**Books:**

*Near the Exit: Travels with the Not-So-Grim Reaper*, 2019, Westminster John Knox Press

*Holy Rover: Journeys in Search of Mystery, Miracles, and God*, 2017, Fortress Press

*Iowa: Off the Beaten Path (10th Edition)*, 2017, Globe Pequot

**Resources & Talents:** Public Speaker on travel and spirituality

**Fries, Cortney (2017)**

Freelance Writer

38 Palisades Blvd, Hawthorn Woods, IL 60047

Cell: (773) 931-1293

Email: [cortneyfries@yahoo.com](mailto:cortneyfries@yahoo.com) | [www.cortneyfries.com](http://www.cortneyfries.com)

Facebook: @cortneyfrieswriter | Instagram: @cortneyfries |

Twitter: @cortneyfries

**Media Outlets:**

AAA Go, AAA Traveler, Family Vacation Critic, Chicago Parent magazine

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Budget, Camping/RV, Cruising, Events, Family Getaways, Food & Wine, General Destination, Golf, Green Travel, Luxury, Music & Live Entertainment, Outdoor, Quirky, Shopping, Women's Travel

**Books:**

*Chicken Soup for the Soul: Time to Thrive*, May 2015, Simon & Schuster

**Resources & Talents:** Instagram micro-influencer

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Member of SATW & Family Travel Association; Nat. Parenting Media Assoc. Award for Service Feature

**Granger, Elizabeth (2017) \***

Freelance Journalist

13445 Nottingham Road, Fishers, IN 46038

Office: (317) 849-5514

Email: elizabethgrangertravel@gmail.com

www.GoneAgainGranger.com

Instagram: @GoneAgainGranger

**Media Outlets:**

AAA Midwest Traveler, Travel Indiana

**Specialties:** General Destination

**MTJA Offices held:** GEMmy Awards Chair

**Halsted, Jody (2017)**

Halsted Enterprises, Inc., Writer \* Publisher \* Podcaster

3213 NW Boulder Brook Pl., Ankeny, IA 50023

Office: (515) 707-6547

Email: JLHalsted@halstedenterprises.biz |

irelandfamilyvacations.com | campingtipsforeveryone.com

Facebook: @iatraveler | Instagram: @jodyhalsted | Twitter:

@jodyhalsted

**Media Outlets:**

Ireland Family Vacations, Camping Tips for Everyone

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Camping/RV, Culture & History,

Family Getaways, General Destination, Luxury, Outdoor, Quirky,

Women's Travel

**Books:** *Planning the Ireland Vacation of Your Dreams*, April 2017, self-published

**Resources & Talents:** Digital educator on SEO, web publishing, and partnerships

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** 2017 NATJA Awards - bronze for best book or Travel Guide for *Planning the Ireland Vacation of Your Dreams* (2017); Mark Twain Award - 1st place digital for *Traveling in Ireland Podcast* (2018); Mark Twain Awards - 1st place Travel Blog for Ireland Family Vacations (2019)

**Harpt, Jerry E. (2017) \***

Freelance Writer  
Challenging Our Horizons  
N 3231 River Dr., Wallace, MI 49893  
Home: 715-923-8861 | Cell: 715-923-8821  
Email: jerryharpt@gmail.com

**Media Outlets:** Experience Michigan (current), Peshtigo Times-weekly (current), Our Wisconsin, Silent Sports Magazine

**Specialties:** Outdoor, Family, Getaways, Culture & History, Senior (50+), Adventure Travel, Camping/RV, Bed & Breakfasts, General Destination, Kayak, Canoe, Hiking

**Resources & Talents:** Stock photography from: Arizona, Wisconsin, Michigan, Tennessee, Kansas

**Hey, Elizabeth (Beth) (2017) \***

Freelance Writer, Editor & Photographer  
9947 NW Old Tiffany Springs Rd, Kansas City, KS, 67206-4482  
Office: (816) 509-7142  
Email: elizabeth@elizabethhey.com | www.elizabethhey.com  
Instagram: @travelbyfork

**Media Outlets:**

PBS Travelscope Magazine, Matador Network, Group Travel Leader, Select Traveler (groups), Going on Faith (groups), Small Market Meetings, Show-Me Missouri

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Art, Bed & Breakfasts, Cruising, Culture & History, Family Getaways, Food & Wine, General Destination, Group Tours, Luxury, Outdoor, Women's Travel

**Resources & Talents:** Stock photography from: Alaska, Hawaii, Arizona, Missouri

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Gold MarCom Award, (2014)

**Other:** Spouse/Partner: Kevin

**Hoekman, David (2017) \***

Group Tour Media, Managing Editor  
2465 112th Ave., Holland, MI 49424  
Office: (800) 767-3489  
Email: david@grouptour.com | www.grouptourmagazine.com  
Twitter: @DavidGroupTour

**Media Outlets:**

Group Tour Northeast/Midwest, Group Tour Southeast/West, Student Group Tour

## Actives

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Culture & History, General Destination, Group Tours, Senior (50+), Shopping, Literary, Student

**MTJA Offices Held:** Active Director (2018 - present)

## Knowles, Gary (2017) \*

Knowles Communications, President

487 Presidential Lane, Madison, WI 53711

Office: (608) 231-3884

Email: [openair@aol.com](mailto:openair@aol.com) | [www.KnowlesCommunications.com](http://www.KnowlesCommunications.com)

Facebook: @gary.knowles | Instagram: @Openair93 | Twitter:

@travelwisconsin, @garyknowles, @wegotcool

## Media Outlets:

Journal and Topics newspaper, BIG EASY – Radio Network, WI Public Radio, Madison Magazine, Rochester (MN) Post Bulletin

**Specialties:** Antiques, Apps & Guidebooks, Art, Bed & Breakfasts, Business Travel, Cruising, Culture & History, Events, Family Getaways, Food & Wine, General Destination, Golf, Group Tours, LGBT, Luxury, Music & Live Entertainment, Outdoor, Quirky, Shopping, Other: Architecture, Consumer Tips, History, Auto Tours, Auto Racing, Off the Beaten Path, Great Lakes Region.

## Resources & Talents:

Stock photography from: Wisconsin, Great Lakes Region, Louisiana, Rock Music - Concerts & Festivals, Autumn, South Dakota, Michigan, New York; Public Speaker: "Top Ten Wisconsin Getaways," "Promoting Your Destination - Getting the Attention You Deserve," "Best Drives in Wisconsin," "Driving Topless," "Circling Superior," "The Great River Road," "Working with Travel Journalists" Spokesperson/Interview Guest, Auto Tours; Midwest Destinations; Autumn Travel; Travel IS Economic Development; The Positive Impact of Tourism; Shooting Better Travel Photos; Where to Hear Great Music - Music Venues; Group Tour Leader; Teaches Travel Journalism

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Wisconsin Governor's Tourism Legacy Award-2017; SATW Central States Amarillo TX Photo Shootout - Winner: Cultural Scenic 2018; SATW Central States Cincinnati, OH Photo Shootout - 2nd Place - Cultural Scenic; MTWA Columbus OH Photo Shootout - Winner - 2016; SATW Member; Milwaukee Press Club Member

**Other:** Spouse/Partner: Mae Patrice

**MTJA Offices held:** Current President (2017 – 2020), Ethics Chair

**Kraus, Susan J. (2017)**

Freelance Writer/Photographer

2603 Orchard Lane, Lawrence, KS 66049

Office: 785-843-8321

Email: susanjkraus58@gmail.com | www.susankraus.com

**Media Outlets:** Lawrence Magazine, Topeka Magazine, Senior Special Edition, Wedding Special Edition, Sunflower Publishing, Huffington Post Travel

**Specialties:** Cruising, Culture & History, Family, General Destination, Getaways, GLBT, Senior (50+), Women's Travel, Traveling with Autistic or Special Needs Children, Traveling with Elderly Parents, Planning Reunions

**Laffey, Mary Lu (2020)**

Freelance Writer/Editor/Blogger

20 ½ West 8<sup>th</sup> Street, #320, Holland, MI 49423

Office: 616-368-9343

Email: laffey2@earthlink.net

**Media Outlets:** Small Newspaper Group, Destinations Magazine

**Specialties:** Culture, General Destination, Sustainable Travel, Road Trips by car, Motorcycle or Rail, Group Travel, Cruising, Women's Travel, B2B Travel

**Meyer, Diana Lambdin (2017) \***

Journalist

6124 NW Pine Ridge Circle, Parkville, MO 64152

Cell: (816) 587-7787

Email: dianalambdinmeyer@gmail.com

Facebook: @diana.l.meyer.39 | Instagram: @mojotraveler |

Twitter: @mojotraveler | Travel Blog: www.mojotraveler.com

**Media Outlets:**

BBC Travel, Fodors.com, Minneapolis Star Tribune, Dallas Morning News, AAA Midwest Traveler, AAA World, Show Me Missouri Magazine, FoodieTravelUSA, Islands.com

**Specialties:** Culture & History, Events, General Destination, Outdoor, Quirky

**Books:**

*Nebraska: Off the Beaten Path,*      *Kansas Myths & Legenda,*  
2018, Rowman & Littlefield      2018, Rowman & Littlefield

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Travel Journalist of the Year, (2018, 2015, 2007)

**MTJA Offices held:** Mary Ethel's Basket Chair

### **Locke, Karen (2019)**

Travel Writer

Sand and Snow...and everywhere in between!

930 North St., East Liverpool, OH 43920

Cell: (330) 383-2346

Email: klocke@sandandorsnow.com | karynlocke@comcast.net

www.sandandorsnow.com

Instagram: @karynlocke | Twitter: @karynlocke

#### **Media Outlets:**

Sand and Snow...and everywhere in between!, WDW Magazine,  
Travelingmom.com

**Specialties:** General Destination, Food & Drink, Disney, Talk &  
Tech, Beauty

### **Long Tabbert, Donna (2017) \***

Freelance Writer

3501 Harding St. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418

Cell: 612-743-8162

Email: writewords35@comcast.net | Travel

Blog: www.travelsweet.blogspot.com | Twitter: tabbertlong |

Instagram: @expressothyself

**Media Outlets:** Minneapolis Star Tribune

**Specialties:** Art, Bed & Breakfasts, Culture & History, Family, Food &  
Wine, General Destination, Getaways, Luxury, Quirky, Shopping,  
Women's Travel, Antiques

### **Lynch, Amy (2017) \***

Freelance Writer

6080 N. Oxford St., Indianapolis, IN 46220

Cell: (317) 902-4383

Email: amy@amylynch.com | www.amylynch.wordpress.com

Facebook: @amylynch1970 | Instagram: @mostlymidwestern

Twitter: @mostlymidwestrn

#### **Media Outlets:**

Midwest Living, Indianapolis Monthly, Long Weekends, AAA  
Home & Away, TripSavvy.com, LonelyPlanet.com, Travel  
Indiana Magazine, VisitIndiana.com

**Specialties:** Budget, Culture & History, Family Getaways, Food &  
Wine, General Destination, Women's Travel

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** MTJA Mark Twain award winner

**MTJA Offices held:** Active Vice President (2018 - present),  
Professional Development Chair, Website Chair

**Meyers McClintick, Lisa (2017) \***

Freelance Travel Writer & Photographer

95 Woodhill RD, St. Cloud, MN 56301

Office: (320) 250-0163 | Cell: (320) 250-0163

Email: [lmcc Clintick@charter.net](mailto:lmcc Clintick@charter.net) | [www.LisaMcClintick.com](http://www.LisaMcClintick.com)

Instagram: @minnelisa | Twitter: @LisaMcClintick

**Media Outlets:**

USA Today Go Escape, Midwest Living, TravelChannel.com,

Minnesota Monthly, Minneapolis Star Tribune, AAA Colorado

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Budget, Family Getaways, Green Travel, Outdoor, Quirky, Farm stands & agritourism

**Books:**

*Day Trips from the Twin Cities,*  
2014, Globe Pequot Press

*The Dakotas Off the Beaten Path,* 2015, Globe Pequot

**Resources & Talents:** Public Speaker/Interview Guest "Midwest Destinations," "Working with Travel Journalists," "Traveling with Children." Teaches Writing for a Sense of Place, Travel and Nature Photography, Creating a Travel Journal or Sketchbook. Stock Photography for Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Midwest and Great Lakes, harvest travel and national parks along the West Coast.

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** 2019 Mark Twain Awards Travel Writer of the Year, Midwest Travel Journalists Association. First Place for Best Domestic Newspaper Article and Photojournalism for "Colossal Forests, Thick Fog and Stunning Eco-Diversity in Olympic National Park." First place, Best Domestic Newspaper Article, "A Tour of Oregon: From Orchards to Ocean." Also won honorable mention for photojournalism, 2016 Mark Twain Awards, Midwest Travel Writers Association. Member, Society of American Travel Writers.

**Meyer, Bruce (2017)**

6124 NW Pineridge Circle, Parkville, MO 64152

Cell: (816) 210-7787

Email: [kameramann@aol.com](mailto:kameramann@aol.com) | [www.mojotraveler.com](http://www.mojotraveler.com)

Instagram: @bruce\_n\_meyer Twitter: @BruceNMeyer

**Specialties:** Cruising, Culture & History, Events, Outdoor

**Media Outlets:**

Minneapolis Star Tribune, USA Today, AAA Midwest Traveler, Show Me Missouri

**Mink, Randy (2017) \***

Leisure Group Travel Magazine & Cruise Travel Magazine

Senior Editor

301 Sulgrave Court, Bolingbrook, IL 60440

Office: (630) 640-3006

Email: rrmink0102@yahoo.com | [www.leisuregrouptravel.com](http://www.leisuregrouptravel.com)

**Media Outlets:**

Leisure Group Travel Magazine, Cruise Travel Magazine, Group Travel Destinations Magazine

**Specialties:** Camping/RV, Cruising, Culture & History, Food & Wine, Family Getaways, General Destination, Group Tours

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Central States SATW Best International Magazine Article, (2018); MTJA International Magazine Article, 2nd place, (2018); MTWA Travel Journalist of the Year, (2014)

**Mostyn, Carolynn (2017) \***

Writer & Photographer

2419 Meadow Spring Circle, Akron, OH 44312

Cell: (330) 608-5603

Email: cmostyn24@aol.com

Instagram: @CR\_RAE | Twitter: @boomertravelers | Travel Blog:

<https://writetravels.blogspot.com>

**Media Outlets:**

Akron Beacon Journal, Canton Repository, Star News, Santa Rosa's Press Gazette, Providence Journal, Columbus Dispatch, NFW Daily News, Sea Coast Portsmouth, The Alliance Review, Echo Pilot Pennsylvania

**Specialties:** Culture & History, Events, Family Getaways, General Destination, Outdoor, Quirky, Women's Travel

**Books:**

*I Never Wanted to Be a Princess-Good Thing! or How I Lost 380 Pounds Without Diet or Exercise*, 2018, Covenant Books

**Resources & Talents:** Public Speaker, "Have Laughs, Will Travel", "Out of My Mature Mind"; Photography for travel stories

**Nicol, Stephanie (2019)**

Travel Indiana Magazine, Editor

20885 Overdorf Road, Nobelsville, IN 46062

Cell: (317) 850-3592

Email: [snicol@travelindiana.com](mailto:snicol@travelindiana.com) | [www.travelindiana.com](http://www.travelindiana.com)

**O'Meara, Pamela H. (2017) \***

Freelance Writer

1663 Lakeview Court, Arden Hills, MN 55112

Phone: 651-636-1856

E-mail: [pammieo@aol.com](mailto:pammieo@aol.com)

Travel Blog: [www.travelswithpam.wordpress.com/](http://www.travelswithpam.wordpress.com/)

**Media Outlets:** Lillie Suburban Newspapers, LiveDan330.com

**Specialties:** Culture & History, Family, Food & Wine, General Destination, Outdoor, Quirky, Senior (50+), Adventure Travel, Cruising, Bed & Breakfasts

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** MN Newspaper Association, 2015, 2nd Place Columns; MTWA Mark Twain, Recent Sites, 2013, 1st Place; MTWA, Newspaper, Midwest Travel Writers Mark Twain, Honorable Mention for story on Hemingway in Pamplona, Spain, 2014; 2008 MTWA 3rd Place Hawaii The Big Island; 2006 2nd Place newspaper story on South Korea-DMZ; 2016 Mark Twain Award: Honorable Mention for Culinary Articles "In Door County, Life Is Just A Bowl of Cherries"

**Ostmann, Barbara Gibbs (2017) \***

Taste of Travel Writer, & Photographer

4467 Big Creek Road, Gerald, MO 63037

Cell: (314) 640-0764

Email: [barbostmann@yahoo.com](mailto:barbostmann@yahoo.com)

Twitter: @BarbOstmann | [www.tasteoftravel.com](http://www.tasteoftravel.com) |

[www.emissourian.com](http://www.emissourian.com) | Instagram: @BarbOstmann

**Media Outlets:**

AAA Midwest Traveler, AAA Southern Traveler, Missourian, MissouriLife, Inside Columbia, Boom! Terrain

**Specialties:** Art, Business Travel, Camping/RV, Cruises, Family Getaways, Food & Wine, Luxury, Music and Live Entertainment, Outdoor, Quirky, Shopping

**Resources & Talents:** Public speaker, Writing Workshop, leader/instructor, Recipe Editing Specialist, speaker/instructor, co-author "The Recipe Writer's Handbook", Kayaking instructor

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Missouri Outdoor Communicators, President 2019, AGLOW, multiple Art-in-Craft awards for writing

### *Actives*

and photography, 2015, 2017, 2018, NATJA, magazine writing 2016, MTWA, magazine and newspaper writing 2007, 2013 American Canoe Association, Certified Kayak Instructor 2016 Missouri Stream Teams, Team Leader, Les Dames d'Escoffier, St. Louis Chapter, founding vice-president, St. Louis Culinary Society, founding president

**Offices/Committees:** Co-chaired bylaws revision committee, membership review committee

### **Podolak, Janet (2017) \***

Travel / Food Editor

*The News-Herald & The Morning Journal*

7085 Mentor Ave., Willoughby, OH 44094

Office: 440-954-7199 | Cell: 440-308-5020

Email: jpodolak@News-Herald.com | [www.news-herald.com](http://www.news-herald.com)

**Media Outlets:** The News-Herald weekly Food, monthly Travel sections; The Morning Journal monthly travel sections

**Specialties:** General Destination, Food & Wine, Outdoor, Family, Getaways, Culture & History, Luxury, Budget, Quirky, Senior (50+), Adventure Travel, Women's Travel, Cruising, Art, Bed & Breakfasts, Events

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** 2016 Travel Journalist of the year; multiple MTWA awards 2016, 2015, 2014; multiple SATW Central States awards 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013; Multiple awards NATJA

**Pollack, Susan (2017) \***

Susan R. Pollack, Travel Journalist, Detroit News Travel Blogger,  
Freelance Writer & Photographer, Copy Editor, Jonglez Publishing  
25129 W. Roycourt, Huntington Woods, MI 48070  
Office: (248) 622-7837 | Cell: (248) 622-7837  
Email: srpollack@yahoo.com | [www.detroitnews.com/travelblog](http://www.detroitnews.com/travelblog)  
Facebook: @Susan R. Pollack | Instagram: @srpollack | Twitter:  
@susanrpollack | Travel Blog: [detroitnews.com/travelblog](http://detroitnews.com/travelblog)

**Media Outlets:**

Detroit News, Experience Michigan Magazine, Lakeland  
Boating, Michigan History Magazine, Jetsetter.hk Magazine,  
[detroitnews.com](http://detroitnews.com), [TheWineBuzz.com](http://TheWineBuzz.com)

**Specialties:** Art, Cruising, Culture & History, Events, Food & Wine,  
General Destination, Golf, Group Tours, Luxury, Music & Live  
Entertainment, Quirky, Senior (50+), Shopping

**Books:**

*Contributor to America's 100 Best Places to Retire*, 2018,  
Vacation Publications, Inc.

**Resources & Talents:** Stock photography from: Michigan, Great  
Lakes region (Chicago, Columbus, Toledo, Toronto and  
southern Ontario); NY's Finger Lakes region; Europe  
(Amsterdam, Berlin and southwest Germany, Krakow,  
Budapest, Salzburg, southern France, Spain (Pamplona,  
Valencia, Barcelona, Zaragoza, Madrid); Travel consultant;  
Research, reporting, interviewing, editing, copy editing,  
proofreading

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** SATW Central States, several 1st, 2nd,  
3rd place and honorable mentions, (2014-18); MTWA Mark  
Twain Awards: several 1st, 2nd, 3rd place and honorable  
mentions, (2014-18); Muster Photo Award - SATW, 2nd  
place/profile, (2016)

**Pramik, Wendy (2017) \***

Freelance Photojournalist  
447 Clinton Heights Ave., Columbus, OH 43202  
Cell: (614) 565-7678  
Email: wpramik@columbus.rr.com  
[www.ColumbusFamilyAdventures.com](http://www.ColumbusFamilyAdventures.com)  
Facebook: @cbusfamilyadventures | Instagram:  
@columbus\_family\_adventures | Twitter: @wpramik  
Travel Blog: [ColumbusFamilyAdventures.com](http://ColumbusFamilyAdventures.com)

**Media Outlets:**

### *Actives*

Columbus Dispatch, Cleveland Plain Dealer, Chicago Tribune, USA Today, Boston Globe, Dallas Morning News, Midwest Living, Home & Away Magazine, AAA Journey's Magazine, Go Escape Magazine

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Art, Bed & Breakfasts, Budget, Culture & History, Events, Family Getaways, Food & Wine, General Destination, Luxury, Music & Live Entertainment, Outdoor, Quirky

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Voted "Favorite Central Ohio Mom Blogger" by Thurber House of Columbus; Recipient of multiple Mark Twain awards from (2009 to 2018) from MTWA and MTJA for newspaper and magazine writing and photojournalism

**Resources/Talents:** Featured monthly contributor to "Ohio. Find It Here."

**MTJA Offices/Committees:** New member committee

### **Quinley, Mary (2017) \***

Freelance Journalist

9924 Fairfield, Livonia, MI 48150

Phone: 734-751-9429

Email: quinleym@aol.com

**Media Outlets:** Journal & Topics newspapers

**Specialties:** General Destinations, Food & Wine, Culture & History, Family, Outdoor, Getaways, Senior (50+), Adventure Travel, Women's Travel

**MTJA Offices Held:** MTJA Players Chair

### **Retzlaff, Robert (2017) \***

Travel Editor

Rochester Post-Bulletin

18 SE First Ave., Rochester, MN 55903-6118

Office: 507-285-7704 | Cell: 507-358-1900

Toll Free: 800-533-7772

Email: retz@charter.net | www.postbulletin.com

**Media Outlets:** Rochester Post-Bulletin

**Specialties:** Luxury

**Rhein, Jamie (2017) \***

Freelancer

2558 Glenmawr Ave., Columbus, OH 43202

Office: 614-256-4982

Email: jrhein@hotmail.com

**Media Outlets:**

Ohio Magazine, Ohio Cooperative Living, Hotel Scoop,  
Philipsburg Mail, Long Weekends

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Art, Bed & Breakfasts, Budget,  
Camping/RV, Cruising, Culture & History, Family, Food & Wine,  
Getaways, Luxury, Outdoor, Quirky, Shopping, Women's Travel

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Mark Twain Award 500 word article 1st  
place (2017); Mark Twain Award 500 word article 1st place  
(2015)

**Rodeghier, Katherine (2017) \***

Freelance Travel Journalist & Writer

4260 Clausen Ave., Western Springs, IL 60558

Office: (312) 622-2419

Email: k.rodeghier@gmail.com | www.krodeghier.com

Instagram: @traveljournophotog | Twitter: @KRodeghier

**Media Outlets:**

St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Midwest Traveler, Agent@Home, Dallas  
Morning News, Fido Friendly Magazine, Chicago Tribune, Cruise  
Travel Magazine, Global Traveler Magazine, GoNomad.com,  
FoodieTravelUSA.com

**Specialties:** Cruising, Culture & History, Food & Wine, Quirky,  
Senior (50+)

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Travel Classics writing contest winner  
(2019); ecology, conservation, preservation, Central States  
Chapter, (2019) SATW; recent sites, Mark Twain Award, (2019)  
MTJA; Newspaper, domestic, Mark Twain Award, (2018) MTJA;  
Article past meeting sites, Central States Chapter, (2018) SATW;  
Photography, past meeting sites, awarded by Central States  
Chapter, (2018) SATW; Self-illustrated article, awarded by Central  
States Chapter, (2017) SATW; Culinary travel, Mark Twain Award,  
MTJA (2017) MTJA; Photojournalism, Mark Twain Award, MTJA  
(2017) MTJA

**MTJA Offices held:** Active Director (2018 - present)

*Actives*

**Schnyder, Melinda (2017) \***

Freelance Writer, Editor & Photographer

1059 N. Stratford Lane, Wichita, KS 67206

Cell: (316) 393-8271

Email: mvschnyder@gmail.com | www.MelindaSchnyder.com

Instagram: @ms\_pix | Twitter: @melindaschnyder

**Media Outlets:**

Wichita Eagle/Kansas.com, AAA World, AOPA Online (Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association)

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Business Travel, Culture & History, Events, Family Getaways, General Destination, Golf, Group Tours, Luxury, Outdoor, Aviation

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** SATW; Mizzou Alumni Association

**Other:** Spouse/Partner: Lee

**MTJA Offices held:** Membership Renewal Committee, Active Director, April 2019 - 2022

## **Sheckler Finch, Jackie (2017) \***

Journalist

9330 E. Conard Drive, Bloomington, IN 47401

Phone: 812-335-9463

Email: JackieSFinch@gmail.com | www.JackieShecklerFinch.com

Instagram: @Jackie\_Sheckler\_Finch Twitter: @JackieSFinch

### **Media Outlets:**

M Magazine, DeSoto Magazine, Bus & Motorcoach News, H&L Magazine, All Things Cruise, Crown Cruise Vacations, Herald-Times, Small Newspaper Syndicate, Biz Net

**Specialties:** Apps & Guidebooks, Art, Bed & Breakfasts, Budget, Cruising, Culture & History, Food & Wine, General Destination, Group Tours, Luxury, Music & Live Entertainment, Quirky, Women's Travel, Senior (50+), Kentucky, Indiana, Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Mississippi, Michigan

### **Books:**

*Insider's Guide to Nashville*,  
2019, Globe Pequot Publisher

*Ohio Off the Beaten Path*,  
2019, Globe Pequot Publisher

*Louisiana Off the Beaten Path*,  
2019, Globe Pequot Publisher

*Alabama Off the Beaten Path*,  
2019, Globe Pequot Publisher

*Michigan Off the Beaten Path*,  
2018, Globe Pequot Publisher

**Resources & Talents:** Journalist, Photographer, Editor

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** 1st Recent Sites MTJA, (2019); 1st Digital MTJA (2019); 1st Preservation SATW Central States, (2019); 1st Series SATW Central States, (2019); 1st International Magazine MTJA, (2018); 1st Culinary MTJA (2018); 1st Photojournalism MTJA, (2017); 1st Digital SATW Central States, (2017); Bradshaw Travel Writer of the Year SATW Central States, (2016); 1st Ecology SATW Central States (2016)

**Shuman, Mark (2017) \***

MNS Communications, Inc., Freelance Writer

1280 Lake Ave., Crystal Lake, IL 60014

Office: (815) 459-7311 Cell: (847) 224-8017

Email: imshuman@aol.com | <https://mshuman.contently.com/>

Facebook: @mark.shuman.35

**Media Outlets:**

Chicago Tribune, Journal and Topics, Los Angeles Times,

Baltimore Sun, Small Newspaper Group, New York Daily News

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Budget, Family Getaways, Outdoor

**Resources & Talents:** Writing, interviewing, editing. News, feature stories and business communications.

**Smith, Terri Peterson (2017) \***

6313 Loch Moor Dr., Edina, MN 55439

Home/Office: 952-943-4072 | Cell: 612-483-9876

Email: tsmith952@comcast.net | [www.terripetersonsmith.com](http://www.terripetersonsmith.com)

Instagram: @uniqueeatstwincities | Twitter: @terriwrites

Travel Blog: [www.offthebeatenpathtravel.com](http://www.offthebeatenpathtravel.com)

**Media Outlets:**

USA Today, ROVA, Delta Sky, Garden & Gun, Trailer Life, Fly

Washington, Live Happy, Michigan Today

**Books:** Off The Beaten Page: The Best Trips for Book Clubs, Lit

Lovers and Girls on Getaways 2013, Chicago Review Press

Unique Eateries of the Twin Cities 2017, Reedy Press

**Specialties:** Camping/RV, Culture & History, Food & Wine,

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** MTJA Mark Twain awards: best travel

book (2014), best magazine article/U.S. (2018); IFTWA:

Excellence in Journalism Award, (2015)

**Resources/Talents:** Interview Guest – literary travel, restaurants

and food-related travel, road trips

**MTJA Offices Held:** Newsletter Editor

## Sotonoff, Roberta (2017) \*

Freelance Writer

318 Michael Manor, Glenview, IL 60025

Cell: (847) 400-4461

Email: rsotonoff@aol.com | www.robertasotonoff.com

### Media Outlets:

JAXFAX, Fodor's Chicago, Fodor's Caribbean Guides, AAA Home & Away, Go World Traveler Magazine, Daily Herald, Trave2Next, KimKim, Jewish St. Maarten-Synagogues and Sand Floors

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Apps & Guidebooks, Culture & History, Family, Food & Wine, General Destination, Luxury, Outdoor, Quirky, Senior (50+)

**Resources/Talents:** Photography, Professional Speaker

### Books:

*Fodor's Caribbean*, ongoing contributor

*Fodor's Chicago*, ongoing contributor

*To Thailand with Love*  
(contributor), October 2013

*To Asia with Love-Nepal*,  
October 2013

**Resources & Talents:** Photography, Professional Speaker

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** I have won numerous SATW and MTWA and MTJA awards

## Steinberg, Janet (2017) \*

Freelance Travel Writer, Blogger & Photographer

900 Adams Crossing Suite 9200, Cincinnati, OH 45202

Office: (513) 241-1093

Email: jxs2travel@aol.com | www.thetravelauthority.com

Travel Blog: www.thetravelauthority.blogspot.com

### Media Outlets:

thetravelauthority.blogspot.com, Journal & Topics newspapers, thetravelauthority.com, American Express Destinations, American Israelite

**Specialties:** Art, Cruising, Culture & History, Family, Food & Wine, General Destination, Getaways, Golf, Luxury, Quirky, Senior (50+), Shopping, Women's Travel

**Resources & Talents:** Stock photography from: Europe, North & South America, Australia, Asia, Antarctica

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** SATW 2018 Best Blog Category; SATW 2018 Best Commentary Category; SATW 2018 Best Digital

### *Actives*

Medium Category; MWTW Mark Twain Best Blog 2016 (first place); MTWA Mark Twain Best Blog 2016 (honorable mention); Total of 47 travel writing awards including 3 Lowell Thomas awards; Henry Bradshaw Best of Show; Cipriani Best Overall Writer of Year; numerous additional SATW and MTWA writing awards.

### **Sutin, Kathie (2017) \***

Freelance Writer

9717 Fairgreen Dr., St. Louis, MO 63132-3303

Office: 314-991-3498

Email: [kathie@sutin.net](mailto:kathie@sutin.net); Twitter: @ksutin

**Media Outlets:** St. Louis Post-Dispatch, AAA Midwest Traveler, AAA Southern Traveler, Group Tour Magazine, Student Group Tour Magazine, Travelingmom.com, St. Louis American, Outdoor Guide.

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Budget, Cruises, Family Getaways, Food, History, Outdoor, Quirky, Senior Travel, Women's Travel.

**Resource & Talents:** Journalist (interviewing, writing news and feature stories), Editor, Photographer. Stock photography: Midwest, California, Florida Panhandle, Boston, Martha's Vineyard, southern Germany, Prague, Vietnam countryside, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Taipei

#### **Awards/Honors/Affiliations:**

Missouri Professional Communicators: "Missouri Communicator of the Year" for nine consecutive years until the award was retired. 1st Place, Feature in a Print-based Newspaper for "Amtrak from California to Illinois reveal's country's beauty," 2019. 1st Place, Specialty Articles, Travel for "Heart of thoroughbred country in Kentucky provide laid-back Getaway," 2019. 1st Place, Feature--Online Publication for "Lantern Festival: Magic Reimagined, 2015. 2nd Place, Specialty Articles--Travel for "Great Lake Getaway: From Superman to swamp land 'Southernmost Illinois' offers surprises, 2015. 2nd Place, Specialty Articles--Food for "Travel Around the World Right Here in St. Louis," 2015. 2nd Place, Feature Story, Print-based newspaper for "For grandparents, traveling with kids can forge bonds, memories," 2015. National Federation of Press Women: Honorable Mention: Feature in a Print-based Newspaper for "Soar through the Midwest's best ziplines," 2018

## Usitalo, Kath (2017) \*

Lines & Letters Communications, Writer, Blogger, Photographer & Editor

PO Box 316, Naubinway, MI 49762

Cell: (313) 530-1129

Email: kathusitalo@mac.com | www.kathusitalo.com

Travel Blog: www.greatlakesgazette.com

### Media Outlets:

Experience Michigan magazine, Lakeland Boating, Group Tour Media

**Specialties:** Apps & Guidebooks, Bed & Breakfasts, Culture & History, Events, Family Getaways, Outdoor, Quirky, Senior (50+)

### Books:

|                                                                                      |                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>100 Things to Do in the Upper Peninsula Before You Die</i> , 2017,<br>Reedy Press | <i>100 Things to Do on Mackinac Island Before You Die</i> , 2018,<br>Reedy Press |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

*Secret Upper Peninsula*, 2019,  
Reedy Press

## Vonada, Damaine (2017) \*

Damaine Vonada, LLC, Writer, Editor

505 Marshall Dr., Xenia, OH 45385

Office: (937) 374-1973

Email: shecreates@damaine.net

### Media Outlets:

Journeys, Lakeland Boating, Long Weekends, Home & Away, Lakeland Boating, Ohio Cooperative Living

**Specialties:** Antiques, Art, Bed & Breakfasts, Budget, Culture & History, Events Family Getaways, Food & Wine, General Destination, Quirky, Shopping, Women's Travel, Home & Garden

**Resources/Talents:** Stock Photography – Ohio, Kentucky, Michigan, Indiana

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** First Place, Society of American Travel Writers, Central States Chapter Writing Contest 2016; Second Place, Midwest Travel Writers Association, Mark Twain Awards, Midwest Destinations 2016; Third Place, Midwest Travel Writers Association, Mark Twain Awards, Midwest Destinations 2016; Second Place, Society of American Travel Writers, Central States Chapter Writing Contest 2016; Second Place, Midwest Travel Journalists Assoc; Mark Twain Awards, Short Copy, 2019;

## Actives

SATW Foundation; Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism  
Competition; Awards for Work Published in 2018-2019; Category  
116: Short Work on Travel; Honorable Mention

### **Waldemar, Carla B. (2017) \***

Freelance Travel Journalist  
428 S 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, #314, Minneapolis, MN 55401  
Cell: 612-251-7871  
Email: cwaldemar@comcast.net

**Media Outlets:** Lavender Magazine; Minnesota Goodlife;  
Pathfinders, [www.realfoodtrgaveler.com](http://www.realfoodtrgaveler.com); Journal & Topics  
Newspaper, AAA Magazine; Premier Travel Media

**Specialties:** Art, Cruising, Food & wine, Getaways, Culture &  
History, General Destination, Luxury, Quirky, Senior (50+),  
Women's Travel, Cruising, LGBT

**Books:** *America's Top Restaurants* (Zagat Survey; Twin Cities editor  
since 1996)

**Resources/Talents:** specialty travel speaking and writing, i.e. How  
to Travel Solo

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** MTJA Mark Twain Award Winner,  
MTWA awards annually; Minnesota Magazine Publishers  
Association: best column (travel) 2007 through 2010

**MTJA Offices held:** Active Director (2017 - 2019)

### **Warren, Rich (2017) \***

Freelance Writer  
2123 Luka Avenue, Columbus, OH 43201  
Cell: (614) 325-1863  
Email: richwarren2123@gmail.com  
[www.richjumpswiththechimps.com](http://www.richjumpswiththechimps.com)  
Facebook: @rich.warren.370

#### **Media Outlets:**

AAA World, AAA Home & Away, Ohio Magazine, The Wine  
Buzz, Long Weekends, Go World Travel, AARP.org,  
[TripSavvy.com](http://TripSavvy.com), Chicago Tribune

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Art, Bed & Breakfasts, Budget,  
Culture & History, Events, Family Getaways, Food & Wine,  
General Destination, LGBT, Luxury, Music & Live Entertainment,  
Outdoor, Quirky, Senior (50+)

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Mark Twain writing awards, MTJA,  
2019, SATW Central States writing awards, 2019

**Other:** Spouse/Partner: Paige Wood

### **Watilo Blake, Laura (2018)**

Far-Flung Travels, Content Creator

28810 Wolf Rd., Bay Village, OH 44140

Cell: (216) 401-7031

Email: [laura@farflungtravels.com](mailto:laura@farflungtravels.com) | [www.farflungtravels.com](http://www.farflungtravels.com)

Instagram: @farflungtravels | Twitter: @farflungtravels

#### **Media Outlets:**

Lake Erie Living, Long Weekends, Edible Cleveland, Ohio

Magazine, National Geographic, Farflungtravels.com

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Culture & History, Food & Wine, General Destination, Quirky

**Resources/Talents:** Stock Photography of Ohio and international destinations, Photography consultant

#### **Awards/Honors/Affiliations:**

2020 Muster Photo Awards: Silver, Photographer of the Year;

2019 SATW Central States Writing and Photography Contest:

Writing: 3rd Place, Best Travel Guidebook;

Photography: People – 1st and 2nd places; Action/Motion -

2nd and 3rd places; Food Reflecting Local Cultures - 3rd place;

Best Photo Featuring Past Meeting Sites - 1st place; Best Photo

Featuring Past Meeting Sites – 2nd place

**Books:** Ohio: A Photographic Journey, April 2019, Far Country Press

### **Waterman Gray, Lisa (2017) \***

Freelance Writer

9205 Kessler, Overland Park, KS 66212

Office: (816) 805-8918

Email: [lwatmangray@gmail.com](mailto:lwatmangray@gmail.com) | [www.lisawatmangray.com](http://www.lisawatmangray.com)

Facebook: @lwgray1 | Instagram: @lwgrtravels | Twitter:

@storytellerkc

#### **Media Outlets:**

Bus and Motorcoach News, AAA Midwest Traveler,

WanderWithWonder.com, CommonGood.com,

TravellInspires.com

#### **Awards/Honors/Affiliations:**

Slow Food Kansas City Board Member term renewed

**Specialties:** Culture & History, Family Getaways, Food & Wine, Golf, Outdoor, Women's Travel

**Resources & Talents:** Juried photograph displays, From Wisconsin and Kansas travels, Public Speaker for community organizations and schools, YouTube slideshow producer - 50+ slideshows re: U.S. and International travel

**Weber, Art (2017)**

Outdoors Editor/Travel Writer

7410 Yawberg Road, Whitehouse, OH 43571

Office: 419-270-7506

Email: aweber331@roadrunner.com

Instagram: @artweber.photos

**Media Outlets:** The Mirror Newspapers, The Press Newspapers

**Wessell, Todd (2017) \***

Journal & Topics Media Group, Travel Editor

622 Graceland Ave., Des Plaines, IL 60016

Office: (847) 299-5511

Email: toddwessell@journal-topics.info | [www.journal-topics.com](http://www.journal-topics.com)

**Media Outlets:**

Journal & Topics Media Group

**Specialties:**

Camping/RV, Cruising, Culture and History, Food & Wine, Music & Live Entertainment

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** MTJA Travel Writer of the Year (2017);

First places for International Destination (2017), Domestic

Destinations (2017), Recent Conference Sites (2017), Illinois Press

Feature Writing (2018), 1st place Illinois Press Freedom of

Information (2018)

**Whye, Mike (2017) \***

Freelance Writer-Photographer

Owner, CEO, Trashman

157 Norton Ave, Council Bluffs, IA 51503

Office: (712) 322-6827 | Cell: (712) 310-3342

Email: mike.why@gmail.com | Website: www.mikewhye.com

**Media Outlets:**

Omaha World-Herald, AAA World, Iowa Tourism, Nebraska Tourism

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Apps & Guidebooks, Culture & History

**Resources & Talents:** Stock photograph from Nebraska, Iowa & South Dakota; Public Speaker for Iowa Tourism & Nebraska Sandhills; Adjunct Instructor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha in photojournalism and journalism

**Books:** Iowa's Historic Places, due out March 2020 History Press, South Carolina; Off the beaten path, the Dakota due out summer 2020 Glove Pequot Press

**Award/Honors/Affiliations:** Mark Twain 2nd place Midwest Destinations (2017); Honorable Mention Short Copy (2017)

**MTJA Offices held:** New Member Welcome / Orientation Chair

**Wolfe, Paris (2017) \***

Freelance Writer

853 South Ridge Rd. East, Geneva, OH 44041

Office/Cell: 440-867-8966

Email: pariswolfe@yahoo.com | www.pariswolfe1.com | Blog:

<https://pariswolfe1.com/paris-wolfe-on-travel-and-food/>

Instagram: @pariswolfe | Twitter: @pariswolfe

**Media Outlets:** The News-Herald, The WineBuzz

**Specialties:** Adventure Travel, Bed & Breakfasts, Camping/RV, Cruising, Culture & History, Events, Food & Wine, General Destination, Getaways, Green Travel, Luxury, Quirky, Senior (50+), Shopping, Women's Travel, Motorcycling, Herbs/Gardening

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Winner, MTJA, 2019 Mark Twain Awards, two awards, Winner, MTJA, 2018 Mark Twain Awards, two awards Winner, MTJA, 2017 Mark Twain Awards, four awards Winner, NAMPA 2016 Travel Writer Winner of Feedspot's 2018 and 2016 Top Herb Blog for The Herb Society of America

## NOTES

CANADIAN FORCES SNOWBIRDS RETURN!



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# Cue the Confetti!

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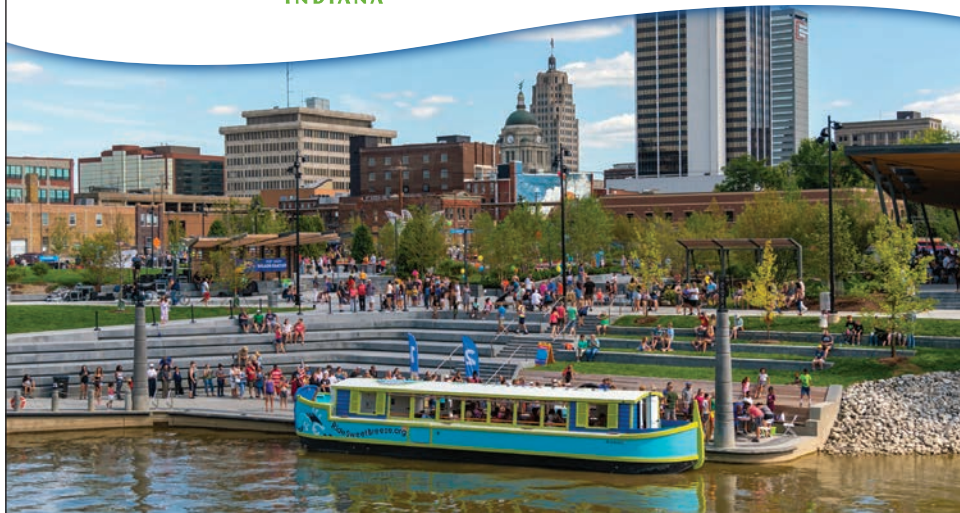
It's all happening in Fort Wayne, Indiana – home to:

- one of the nation's **best zoos**
- the largest public **genealogy center** in the nation
- Vera Bradley Designs, and their **annual outlet sale**
- a vibrant **public art and alleyway project**
- a thriving **music and foodie destination**
- and more!

You're invited to explore Fort Wayne and party with us!



To join a media tour, or schedule a visit to this hotspot of the Midwest, register at [VisitFortWayne.com/Media](https://www.visitfortwayne.com/media)



## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

### **Alexander, Toni (2017) \***

Visit KC, Communications Manager

1321 Baltimore Ave. Kansas City, MO 64105

Office: (816) 691-3848

Email: [talexander@visitkc.com](mailto:talexander@visitkc.com) | [www.visitkc.com](http://www.visitkc.com)

Instagram: @visitkc | Twitter: @visitkc

**Services:** Press trips, media kits, b-roll, images, create itineraries

**MTJA Offices Held:** Media Marketplace Chair

### **Arnold, Melissa (2017) \***

Spencer County Visitors Bureau, Executive Director

39 North Kringle Place (P.O. Box 202), Santa Claus, IN 47579

Office: (812) 937-4199

Email: [marnold@santaclausind.org](mailto:marnold@santaclausind.org) | [www.santaclausind.org](http://www.santaclausind.org)

Facebook: @SantaClausIndiana | Instagram: @santaclausind |

Twitter: @SantaClausInd

**Services:** Custom media trips, press kits, photos, video, trip planning, fact checking, etc.

### **Beenders, Marjorie (2017) \***

The Beenders Walker Group, Co-Owner/Public Relations Director

125 East High Street Suite 200, Jefferson City, MO 65101

Office: (573) 636-8282

Email: [marjorie@tbwgroup.net](mailto:marjorie@tbwgroup.net) | [www.tbwgroup.net](http://www.tbwgroup.net)

**Clients:** Lake of the Ozarks, Fulton, MO and Columbia, MO

**Services:** Customized and/or group press trips, tour escorting, press kits, fact checking, photography, and video

**MTJA Offices Held:** Associate Director (2017 - present), Public Relations Chair, State Membership Chair

**Associate Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** Missouri Tourism Industry Hall of Fame; U.S. Tourism Industry Hall of Leaders; State Travel Director of the Year; National Tour Association Member of the Year; ATLAS Award (Lifetime Achievement Award in Travel Marketing); Lake of the Ozarks Partner in Tourism; Affiliations: Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers; Missouri Outdoor Communicators; Society of American Travel Writers (Jo Duncan, TBWG) and North American Travel Journalists (Jo Duncan, TBWG), North American Travel Journalists Association

**Carr, Alan (2017) \***

Kansas City Kansas Convention & Visitors Bureau, Executive Director  
PO Box 171517, Kansas City, KS 66117

Office: (913) 321-5800

Email: alan@visitkansascityks.com | www.visitkansascityks.com

Instagram: @VisitKansasCityKS

**Services:** Press trips, story assistance, photos

**MTJA Offices Held:** Secretary (2018 – present), Clips/Scrapbook Chair

**Alternate Associate: Yang, Maila (2019)**

Office: 913-321-5800

Email: maila@visitkansascityks.com

**Fitzsimons, Peter (2017) \***

Petoskey, Harbor Springs, Boyne City, Bay Harbor, Executive Director  
401 East Mitchell Street, Petoskey, MI 49770

Office: (231) 439-0916

Email: peter@petoskeyarea.com | www.petoskeyarea.com

Facebook: @petoskeyarea | Instagram: @petoskeyarea | Twitter:  
@petoskeyarea

**MTJA Offices Held:** Ethics committee

**Services:** Along with seasonal supplies of press releases to members we also offer personalized hosted press trips.

**Associate Awards/Honors/Affiliations**

SATW activities include: Co-Chair, 2000 Auction (Wales), Chair, Internet Café 2001-2003 (Bermuda, Hawaii, Orlando), Co-Chair, Professional Development 2005 (Las Vegas), Co-Chair National Convention 2006 (Chile), 2008 – 2009 Sites Committee, Chair, Awards Luncheon 2013 (Biloxi), 2002 – 2018, Central States/National Membership Committee, 2012 – 2020, Chair of the SATW Directory Committee, Co-Chair of the 2017 Central States meeting on Mackinac Island. Honored with the highest distinction in SATW as a Marco Polo. I've also been presented with the Presidents Bowl, 2014; Blake-Whiddon Award, 2012; President's Plate, 2006, 2001; President's Cup, 2003. Local recognition includes the Chairman's Award from the Michigan Lodging & Tourism Association, 2005 and the Michigan Governor's Outstanding Achievement in Tourism Award, 2006

**Gard, Rob (2019)**

Destination Madison, Director of PR & Communications

22 E. Mifflin St., Madison, WI 53703

Office: (608) 441-3958

Email: [gard@visitmadison.com](mailto:gard@visitmadison.com) | [www.visitmadison.com](http://www.visitmadison.com)

Facebook: @travelmadison | Instagram: @visitmadison | Twitter: @Visit\_Madison

**Services:** Press trips

**Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** PRSA Travel and Tourism, SATW

**Gjerde, Jenn (2017)**

Nebraska Tourism Commission, Marketing Manager

301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE 68509

Office: (402) 471-3768

Email: [jen.gjerde@nebraska.gov](mailto:jen.gjerde@nebraska.gov) | [www.visitnebraska.com](http://www.visitnebraska.com)

Instagram: @visit\_nebraska | Twitter: @NebraskaTourism

**Services:** Media tours, images and information

**Guthrie, Kristen (2017)**

Fort Wayne, Indiana, Marketing and Communications Director

927 S. Harrison, Fort Wayne, IN 46805

Office: (260) 424-3700

Email: [kristen@visitfortwayne.com](mailto:kristen@visitfortwayne.com) | [www.visitfortwayne.com](http://www.visitfortwayne.com)

Facebook: @FortWayneIN | Instagram: @visitfortwayne |

Twitter: @visitfortwayne

**Services:** Individual assistance with story ideas, contacts, fact-checking, photo/image library, press trips

**Hilliard, Kelli (2017) \***

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism, PR & Travel

Development Manager

1020 S Kansas Ste 200, Topeka, KS 66612

Office: (785) 296-4922

Email: [kelli.hilliard@ks.gov](mailto:kelli.hilliard@ks.gov) | [www.TravelKS.com](http://www.TravelKS.com)

Facebook: @TravelKS/ | Instagram: @kansastourism | Twitter: @TravelKS

**Services:** Customized press trips, story starters, photo library

**Howell, Amy (2017)**

Visit Indiana, Director of Communications & Media Relations

1 N. Capitol Ave. Suite 600, Indianapolis, IN 46202

Office: (317) 232-8897

Email: amhowell@visitindiana.com | www.visitindiana.com

Facebook: @VisitIndiana | Instagram: @visitindiana | Twitter: @visitindiana

**Services:** Visit Indiana will connect you with destinations and travel resources to uncover your Indiana story. We help set up press trips, supply photos and host a free media marketplace each year.

**Associate Awards/Honors/Affiliations**

4-time Emmy award winner Best Public Relations Campaign - U.S. Travel Association Mercury Award 2017

**Jarosh, Jon (2017) \***

Destination Door County (WI), Director of Communications & PR

1015 Green Bay Road (PO Box 406), Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

Office: (920) 818-1133

Email: jon@doorcounty.com | www.DoorCounty.com

Facebook: @DoorCountyWisconsin | Instagram: @doorcounty | Twitter: @MyDoorCounty

**Services:** Your source for all things Door County! Story/article development, digital photos (high-res) and b-roll (HD/4K), press trips, fact checking, free hugs and any other media assistance for Door County, Wisconsin.

**Korn, Janet M. (2017) \***

Experience Grand Rapids, Senior Vice President

171 Monroe Ave. NW, Suite 545, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Office: 616-233-3545

Email: jkorn@experiencegr.com | www.experienceGR.com

Instagram: @ExperienceGrandRapids | Twitter: @ExperienceGR

**Services:** Press trips, destination photos, story assistance, story suggestions.

**Alternate Associate: Bradley, Stephanie (2017) \***

Office: 616-233-3577

Email: sbradley@experiencegr.com

**Lauer, Emily (2017) \***

Destination Cleveland, Senior Director of PR & Communications  
334 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114

Office: (216) 875-6600

Email: [elauer@destinationcle.org](mailto:elauer@destinationcle.org) | [www.thisiscleveland.com](http://www.thisiscleveland.com)

Facebook: @ThisisCleveland | Instagram: @thisiscle | Twitter: @TheCle

**Services:** Assistance with stories and press trips, photo requests for editorial use, connections to Cleveland area attractions/chefs.

**Lies, Camie (2017) \***

Bismarck-Mandan Convention & Visitors Bureau, Communications Manager

1600 Burnt Boat Dr., Bismarck, ND 58503

Office: (701) 557-7115

Email: [camie@bmcvb.com](mailto:camie@bmcvb.com) | [www.NoBoundariesND.com](http://www.NoBoundariesND.com)

Facebook: @bismancvb | Instagram: @bismancvb | Twitter: @bismancvb

**Services:** Press trips, press kits, high resolution photography, story ideas, information on other ND contacts

**MTJA Offices Held:** Membership Renewal Committee

**Monforton, Renee (2017) \***

Detroit Metro CVB, Director of Marketing and Communications  
211 W. Fort St. Suite 1000, Detroit, MI 48226

Office: (313) 202-1951

Email: [rmonforton@visitdetroit.com](mailto:rmonforton@visitdetroit.com) | [www.visitdetroit.com](http://www.visitdetroit.com)

Facebook: @visitdetroit | Instagram: @visitdetroit | Twitter: @visitdetroit

**Services:** Press trips, media inquiries, press kits, media trade shows, marketing and advertising.

**Morrison, Charlotte (2017) \***

Visit Quad Cities, VP Marketing & Communications

1601 River Drive Suite 110, Moline, IL 61265

Office: (309) 736-6821

Email: cdoehler@visitquadcities.com | www.visitquadcities.com

Facebook: @quadcities | Instagram: @VisitQuadCities | Twitter: @VisitQuadCities

**Services:** Press trips, photos, video, research, itineraries, reservations, complimentary admissions, press kits.

**Alternate Associate: Jessica Waytenick (2017) \***

Office: (309) 736-6827

Email: jwaytenick@visitquadcities.com

**Nemacheck, Tom (2017) \***

Upper Peninsula Travel & Recreation Association, Executive Director  
P.O. Box 400, Iron Mountain, MI 49801

Office: 906-774-5480 | Toll Free: 800-562-7134

Email: tom@uptravel.com | www.uptravel.com

Facebook: @UPtravel | Instagram: @uptravel | Twitter: @UPTravel

**Services:** Press trips, story ideas, press kits

**O'Riley, Jessica (2017) \***

Iowa Tourism Office, Tourism Communications Manager

1963 Bell Avenue, Ste. 200, Des Moines, IA 50315

Office: (515) 348-6256

Email: jessica.oriley@iowaeda.com | www.traveliowa.com

Facebook: @IowaTourism | Instagram: @traveliowa | Twitter: @traveliowamedia

**Services:** Individual assistance with story ideas, contacts, fact-checking, photo/image library, press trips

**MTJA Offices Held:** Associate Vice-President (2018 - present), Facebook Chair

**Paraino, Anthony (2017) \***

Explore St. Louis, Director of Communications

701 Convention Plaza Suite 300, St. Louis, MO 63101

Office: (314) 992-0654

Email: aparaino@explorestlouis.com | www.explorestlouis.com

Facebook: @explorestlouis Instagram: @explorestlouis

**Services:** Press trips, press releases

**Associate Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** PRSA - St. Louis Chapter

*Associates*

**Rounds, Ciara (2019) \***

South Dakota Department of Tourism, Global Media & Public Relations Representative

711 East Wells Ave., Pierre, SD 57501

Office: (605) 773-3301

Email: ciara.rounds@travelsouthdakota.com |

www.travelsouthdakota.com

Facebook: @SouthDakotaTourism | Instagram: @SouthDakota |

Twitter: @SouthDakota

**Services:** Press trips, Press kits, media visits, individual hosting, travel and itinerary assistance, information gathering, fact checking and photo assets

**Alternate Associate: Richter, Katlyn (2017) \***

Office: 605-773-3301

Email: katlyn.richter@travelsouthdakota.com

**Robinson, Megumi (2017) \***

Experience Columbus, Director of Public Relations

277 W Nationwide Blvd. Suite 125, Columbus, OH 43215

Office: (614) 222-6104

Email: mrobinson@experiencecolumbus.com |

www.experiencecolumbus.com

Instagram: @experiencecolumbus | Twitter: @expcols

**Services:** Press trips, photos, b-roll, fact checking, information, etc.

**Associate Awards/Honors/Affiliations:** MTJA member, SATW member, PRSA Travel and Tourism executive committee member, Central Ohio PRSA member, 30 Under 30, Destinations International (2016)

**Sawatski, Jessica (2017) \***

Visit Wichita, Public Relations Manager

515 S Main Suite 115, Wichita, KS 67202

Office: (316) 660-6319 | Cell: (316) 253-5766

Email: jsawatski@visitwichita.com | www.visitwichita.com

Facebook: @visitwichita | Instagram: @VisitWichita | Twitter:

@VisitWichita

**Services:** Press trips, story ideas, reviewing for accuracy, photo library

**Skora, Jordan (2019)**

Louisville Tourism, Marketing & Communications Manager  
401 W. Main St., Ste. 2300, Louisville, KY 40202  
Office: (316) 660-6319 | Cell: (316) 253-5766  
Email: jskora@gotolouisville.com | www.gotolouisville.com  
Facebook: @gotolouisville | Instagram: @gotolouisville | Twitter: @gotolouisville

**Services:** Press trips, itinerary planning, media kits, photography of destination.

**Schmitz Jensen, Julie (2017) \***

Visit Rapid City, President / CEO  
512 Main Street Suite 240, Rapid City, SD 57701  
Office: (605) 718-8481  
Email: jensen@visitrapidcity.com | www.visitrapidcity.com  
Facebook: @RapidCitySouthDakota | Instagram: @VisitRapidCity |  
Twitter: @VisitRapidCity | Blog: blog.visitrapidcity

**Services:** Press trips, Press kits, suggested story pitches, images

**Settle, Kristin (2017)**

Visit Milwaukee, Director of Communications  
648 N. Plankinton Ave. Suite 220, Milwaukee, WI 53203  
Office: (414) 287-6230  
Email: ksettle@milwaukee.org | www.visitmilwaukee.org  
Instagram: @visitmilwaukee | Twitter: @visitmilwaukee

**Services:** Press trips and site visits

**Alternate Associate: Claire Koenig (2017)**

Office: (414) 287-4255  
Email: ckoenig@milwaukee.org

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Instagram: @IndianaFoodway | Twitter: @indianafoodwaysalliance

**Services:** Itinerary planning, photos

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Facebook: @visitindy | Instagram: @visitindy | Twitter: @VisitIndy

Services: Press trips, media kits, photos

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Facebook: @SpringfieldMissouri | Instagram: @lovespringfield |

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**Services:** The Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau provides a variety of services tailored to fit the needs of each journalist who visits our city.

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**Clients:** Experience Columbus, A Walk in the Woods (Great Smoky Mts. Natl. Park), Explore Hocking Hills (OH), Destination Mansfield (OH), Hotel LeVeque (Columbus)

**Services:** Story/content ideas, press trips, images, fact checking, etc.

**MTJA Offices Held:** Sites Director

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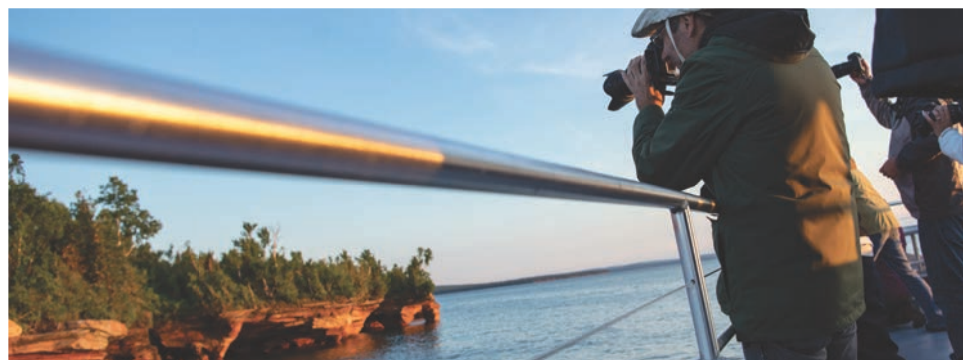
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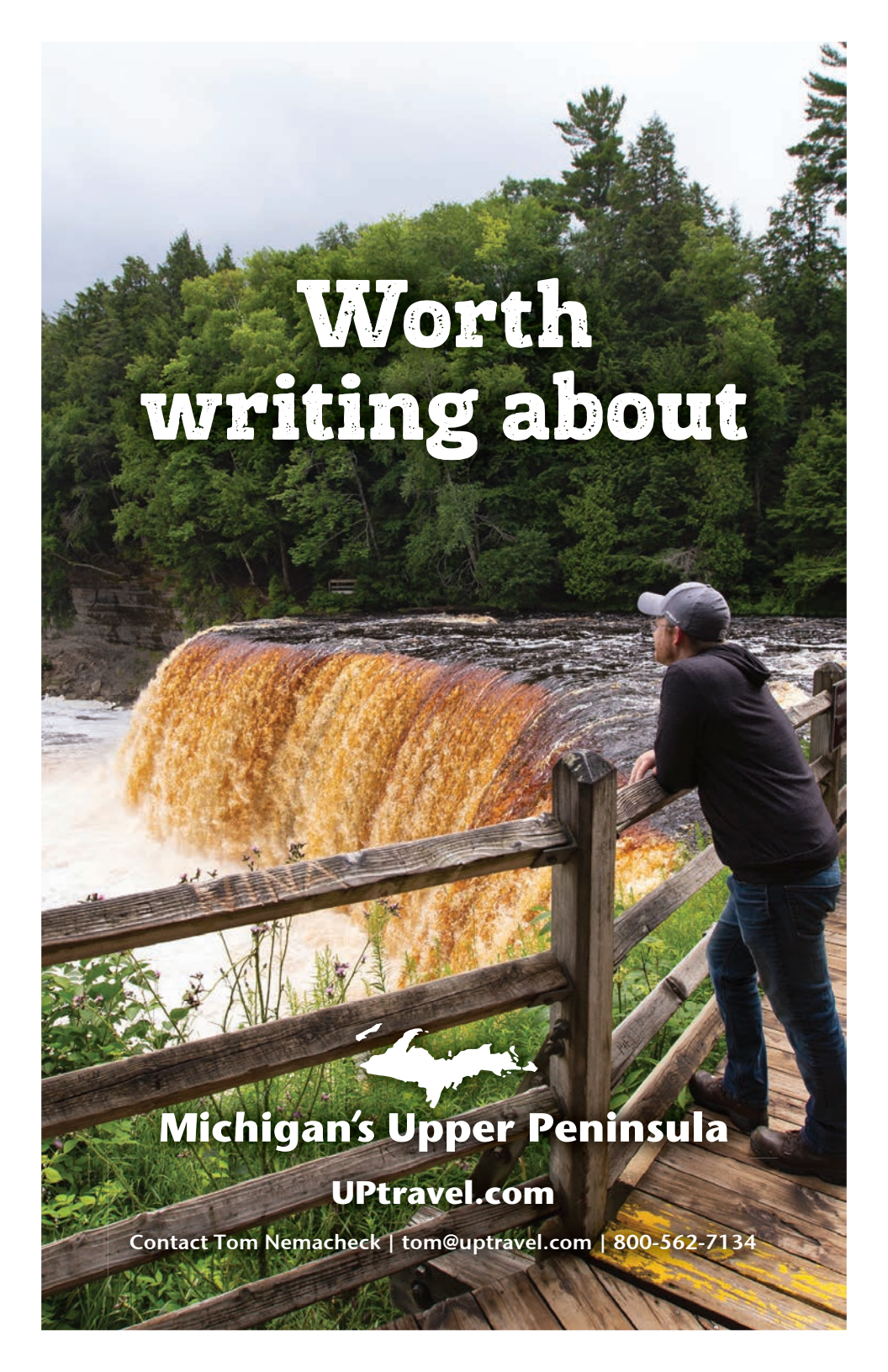
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