



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Team Tourism Travel Rally Day set for May 6 *VCB celebrates Lee County's leading industry*

LEE COUNTY - The Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB) invites tourism partners, their employees and families, along with the community, to attend the annual Team Tourism Travel Rally Day at Lakes Regional Park in Fort Myers on May 6, 4 – 7 p.m.

The event, which includes free admission and prize giveaways, supports National Travel and Tourism Week. It celebrates tourism's impact on local businesses and the economy and recognizes the importance of travel and hospitality professionals. In 2013, 4.8 million visitors spent an estimated \$2.77 billion in Lee County. One-in-five people in Lee County is employed by tourism.

"The support and enthusiasm shown at the rally by members of our travel industry are impressive," said Tamara Pigott, VCB executive director. "It's important to appreciate and celebrate how the travel industry contributes significantly to local job growth and the economy."

Rally participants will enjoy music and friendly competitions, including a bellmen's race, luggage lug, make that bed, waiters' race, and best of the chef friendly contest, featuring mini-taste samplings. The "Come Meet Tourism Outdoor Show" will showcase several Lee County attractions, accommodations, restaurants, transportation and other hospitality partners. Families can enjoy complimentary Lakes Park botanic garden tours, mini train rides, surrey bike tours, and kids' activities.

The master of ceremonies will be meteorologist Allyson Rae with ABC-7. Officials in the tourism industry participating include Dennis Castleman, vice-president of industry relations with U.S. Travel Association; Michael Gehrisch, president and CEO of Destination Marketing Association International; and Larry Kiker, Lee County commissioner and Tourist Development Council chairman.

Partners include ABC-7, JetBlue Airways, Lakes Park Enrichment Foundation, and The News-Press Media Group.

RSVP by May 2 to LeeVCB@leegov.com. Admission ticket and free parking sticker will be emailed, with your name included in the prize drawings. Must be present to win. The deadline for businesses to sign up as a table exhibitor, race team, or best of the chef competition is May 2. Contact Judi Durant with the VCB at 239-590-4855 or jdurant@leegov.com.

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