



April 2017

ASTA Mid-America Chapter



2014-2015-2016 CHAPTER OF THE YEAR

Dear ASTA Member,

The onset of Spring and the celebration of the most important Judeo Christen holiday is typically a time for the new hope and refreshing ideas. This is important on a whole range of topics from world events to the most personal introspections.

In our society and in our own lives it often seems that events move rapidly and problems multiply while workable solutions are hard to find. We cannot ignore the realities of our world or of our lives, but we can choose to seek new perspectives and more positive roles in our personal and business activities.

I have often heard and I truly believe that travel is one of the things that help people understand and appreciated other peoples' cultures while measuring their own enjoyment of living in a world of endless variety and beauty.

It is also true that travel can be an opportunity to explore and appreciate your own heritage. Every time we challenge ourselves to experience a new place or situation we are exposed to information and education.

Most of us consider ourselves fortunate to work in an industry that embodies so many positive aspects. On the other hand some recent events involving overbooking and violations of the so called "Passenger Bill of Rights", remind us that we are often on the front line of protecting and defending our clients. Travel problems happen at all times of the day or night and often must be dealt with immediately and effectively. We should be proud to serve our customers at these critical times.

I want to remind you that your Association has been designed to support and give added strength to your efforts.

Last week a Mid-America board members and ASTA members met with one of our congresswomen, who sits on a number of important committees in the United States House of Representatives. We were able to candidly discuss a whole host of topics including overbooking, burdensome regulations and the impact of multiple layers of taxes that increase the cost of airline travel.

Interactions like this one are very valuable and should be repeated around our chapter and our country. In fact ASTA will hold a national event in Washington DC in June, during which ASTA members from all over the US will go to the offices of the House and Senate members to discuss current tax and regulatory issues.

No question there are strength in numbers, but there is also strength in a common focus and purpose. To this end we are again sponsoring our "All Chapter" meeting to bring our members together and in the company of industry leaders like Arnie Weissmann, editor and chief of Travel Weekly. This event will be held at Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort, south of Pittsburgh, and as was the case with last year's meeting at the Greenbrier, ASTA members will receive significant discounts, since the chapter will underwrite a portion of the cost.

Our intent is to create real value for our members while offering enjoyable, educational and professional experience.

I hope to be able to see many of you at our upcoming events.

Claudia

Claudia Darling
Chapter President

Board Members:
Barbara Mazzola, 1st Vice President
Pam Faust, 2nd Vice President
Pat Reynolds, Treasurer
Connie Corbett, Secretary

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING CHAPTER & NATIONAL EVENTS

ASTA Mid-America Chapter

- Don't Miss Out on ASTA Mid-American's Annual **Indy Day at the Track!** Join us for the **101st Running Indy 500 Event** - May 20, 2017 - [Registration](#) is now open!
- **All Chapter Meeting** - June 8-10, 2017 - will take place at the [Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort](#) just south of Pittsburgh. Our featured speaker this year will be Arnie Weissmann, Editor and Chief of Travel Weekly. Arnie is an important and well respected voice for our industry. He can be expected to discuss "big picture" issues that will be important to our business interests in 2017.
Look for all the details in your inbox this week!

ASTA National

ASTA has an exciting line-up of informative, educational and enjoyable events planned through 2017. We hope you will join us for:

- [ASTA Capital Summit](#) - June 4-6, 2017, Washington DC; which includes:
 - [Premium Business Summit](#), Washington DC, June 5-6, 2017
 - CAC Meeting, June 6, 2017, and
 - [ASTA Legislative Day](#), Washington DC, June 7, 2017
- [ASTA / NACTA Bahamas Showcase](#), - June 21-24, 2017
- [ASTA Global Convention](#), San Diego, CA - August 26-29, 2017



In the News at ASTA.org

- Bloomberg: [Travel Industry on Edge as U.S. Visa Policy Upends Flight Plans](#)
- Travel Weekly: [ASTA: Trump's ban, Mexico rhetoric have inhibited travel](#)
- Travel Pulse: [ASTA Says Trump's Travel Ban Is Having a Negative Effect on Travel](#)
- USA Today: [Searches for U.S.-bound flights fall](#)
- Washington Post: [Ready to plan your spring break trip? These questions will get you started](#)

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Update on California Seller of Travel Law

In September 2016, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law [Assembly Bill 2106](#), which makes several changes to California's seller of travel law - effective January 1, 2017. In an effort to help you comply with the new law, ASTA updated its [California Seller of Travel Fact Sheet](#).

The two main changes AB2016 made to the law are:

● **The independent agent exemption to the registration requirement was broadened to include both single-member limited liability companies whose sole member is an individual and single-shareholder "S" corporations whose sole shareholder is an individual.** Previously, this exemption was only available to "individual, natural persons," which caused problems for a number of ASTA members in California and elsewhere. Independent agents, however, continue to have to meet the stated criteria for the exemption.

● **A new condition of registration is that the seller of travel must provide the file number assigned to it by either the California Secretary of State or the Franchise Tax Board. It is our understanding that obtaining a Secretary of State number is a relatively straightforward process, while a tax number is necessary only if your California sales exceed \$500,000 per year or 25 percent of your total sales (whichever is lower).**

As a reminder, in the eyes of the State of California, unless exempt, you must register as a seller of travel if you "sell, provide, furnish, contract for, arrange, or advertise" to Californians, regardless of where you are located.

The updated fact sheet is here: [California Seller of Travel Law Fact Sheet](#)

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Ready to be a Citizen Lobbyist? Meet Us On Capitol Hill

Going unrepresented in Congress invites disaster at a time when legislators are reconsidering issues that will have a direct impact on your business - from airline ancillary fees to selling Cuba to new regulations on independent contractors. That's why ASTA needs YOU to help us. Join us on Capitol Hill for [ASTA's Legislative Day on June 7th](#), part of the ASTA Capitol Summit 2017. Together, we will make our voices heard in the halls of Congress!



[Click here to REGISTER Today!](#)

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\$216,000 of Business is Waiting for You on ASTA.org

ASTA's Trip Request Service offers members exclusive access to potential business from consumers through our Consumer Leads listings. Interested consumers complete a trip assistance form on TravelSense.org and await a reply from ASTA member travel agents. Last month, over 46,000 consumers visited TravelSense.org and right now, there are 62 requests (as of April 18, 2017) representing almost \$216,000 in potential new business waiting for ASTA agents! Visit ASTA.org to take advantage of these opportunities today.

TRAVEL LEADS:

Access to potential business from consumers seeking travel assistance.

[View Leads Here](#)

Upcoming Webinar from ASTA Headquarters

April 26, 2017 2:00 PM ET: [Hilton](#)

May 3, 2017 2:00 PM ET: [Isreal: Selling Faith-based Travel](#)

Recent ASTA Member Alerts & Press Releases

March 16, 2017— [Florida Action Alert - Help Protect Visit Florida](#)

The global advocates for travel. Go with the pros.

To decline all e-mails from this chapter, [click here](#).