

Access Anything:

The Traveler



LEGENDS OF THE DEEP
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The Traveler

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Editor's Note - *This issue and Looking Back on 2008*

As our loyal readers might directly see, the color scheme of this issue is fall. We have had the most magnificent fall here in Steamboat Springs, CO; many of us are saying it's been the best we've seen in a decade. The colors have been bright – even some reds out here, rare for the alpine tundra – and the days have been sunny, long, and encouraging us outside before the cold wet winter sets in.

But Craig and I had a silver lining visit back to upstate New York this fall, unfortunately for his grandfather's passing, but fortunate enough to see our 2 new 6 month old twin nephews and a 4 week old niece in addition to our wild two-year old nieces, his 4 sisters, and many aunts, uncles, cousins and other family friends. We've been all over this gorgeous planet, but there is no other fall like the one in New England. The rainbow "fruity-flakes" forests backdropped Lake George, and we had a week of near work-free much needed quality family time. A true blessing in disguise.

It gave us time to reflect on this wonderful year we've had and what we have in store for next year. The many expos and conferences scattered throughout our year had been among the best networking opportunities for us to date. So in reminder of that necessity for the home business and in particular what we do, we've brought back the **Networking Page**, and hope you utilize it well.

This year also marks the start of a new Disability Advisory Board for Continental Airlines; in the choppy seas of their business you'd think that this niche was further down on their list. Please see our **Company Highlight** this month to get a glimpse at what this productive group has in store for the best customer-service airline in the business.

We also get to look forward to some exciting new projects and events, so look for those in this issue as well!

Due to our busy schedule, look for our newsletter to come every season now, but we'll try and send out brief tips, business highlights, and other news more often via email through Aweber. As always, we welcome contributions.

We wish you the happiest of holidays as they approach quicker than ever,

All the best,

The Access Anything Team





CUSTOMERS WITH DISABILITIES ADVISORY BOARD

October 6-7, 2008, Houston TX

Continental Airlines Manager of Customer First and Regulatory Programs Bill Burnell spent a large portion of the first year of work on his new job developing the company's first Customers with Disabilities Advisory Board. Bringing on both experts in the field and longtime consultants as well as recommended customers with disabilities with specific experience pertinent to the board, Burnell gathered not only a qualified team to move the company forward in a direction of success, but a synergistic group that unified itself nicely during its first ever meeting in early October in Houston in Continental Airline's hub city.

The board spent the first hours of the two-day conference in introductions, getting to know each other's specialties and experience before Burnell and his fellow Continental managers Marilee Purdee and Omar Idris brought in the troops in "Airline 101." Guests from Reservations, Airport Services, In-Flight, and Customer Care Departments gave overall summaries of their operations while the board listened and took notes. In turn, the board gave input to these departments on operations that fell short of expectation and law abiding in handling customers with disabilities.

Continental's employee response to the conference was overwhelming interest and eagerness to improve. Departments that weren't included in the two-day conference began contacting Burnell and his associates within days of the conference requesting to be included in the next meeting, which has been set for March of 2009.

Disabilities represented by the board at the conference are manual and power wheelchair users, hearing impairments, seeing impairments, and parents of children with cognitive special needs.

For our readers, improvements to look for in the immediate future with Continental are web improvements regarding seating requests and fulfillments, employee training regarding understanding and compliance of the rights and requests of travelers with disabilities, and improved assistance for customers with hearing disabilities regarding pre-boarding and in-flight announcements.

If YOU have an experience you'd like us to relay to the board, please email a 500-word synopsis and a 3-5 sentence suggestion to ask@accessanything.net. Anything much longer than this will likely not be relayed. Remember however that your actual *complaints* must be filed directly with the airlines, and only suggestions for improvements at Continental Airlines will be accepted through Access Anything. That said however, we sincerely value our readers, and want to pass along your suggestions!



Networking with Other Travelers with Disabilities

We started this page to help our readers get the most out of their travels by networking with companies who have already “been there, done that!” The more you network and use each other to grow, the further you can go!



Engineered Travel endeavors to provide information, product referrals, and products which will help you to travel more "easily" and "safely". Whether you're traveling around the world, to your favorite vacation spot, on business, etc. we hope to encourage you to travel more often, in person, not just through magazines and watching the television. Our most important mission is finding assistive technology for easier and safer travels, to maximize your "Abilities" and comfort while traveling.

www.engineeredtravel.com



Social Media Galore....

When we got into the online wave, we started with our blog two years ago... but now there's Facebook and Flickr, Twitter and Technorati, and although online media can consume your every minute, if you manage it well, you can create or tap into an existing network of likeminded people.

For instance, if you take photos? Join Flickr- in just the two weeks after we joined, we had 750 views of only 77 photos.

In the month after we joined Twitter, we had nearly 100 people following us and three weeks after we created a Facebook Cause for our winter ski camp we had 180 members and nearly \$500 raised.

If this isn't the wave of the future of networking, we don't know what is! Don't be left behind! See page 9 for our networking destinations.



Elakah offers guided sea kayaking tours in Bellingham and the San Juan Islands. Our half-day, full-day and multi-day sea kayaking trips are educational, environmentally sustainable, accessible for all abilities, safe and supportive of the local community. Paddling the Northwest since 1990.

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Bringing People with Disabilities to China

In February of 2009, a well respected travel company out of San Francisco, California, Spring Tour (www.spring-tour.com), will begin offering an accessible tour to people with disabilities. Excited about this new niche and the potential of tapping into the multi-billion dollar niche of travelers with disabilities, Spring Tour has developed a four-city, 10-night trip that will include stays at some high end hotels that recently hosted 2008 Olympians and Paralympians, as well as historic and scenic side trips along the way.

Reserved for travel specialists, media, and experts in the field, this inaugural trip to China will be checking out the access of this entire tour and improving on it with recommendations and suggestions to pave the way for future tours to come. A few select spots are reserved for the interested public, with the understanding that the tour may not be fully accessible to start.

The tour visits four and five star resorts in Shanghai, Hangzhou, Xian and Beijing, staying in luxurious rooms while assessing their access and the access of the resorts amenities. The hotels chosen are the Hua Ting Shanghai, the Sofitel West Lake Hotel in Hangzhou, the Xian Shangri La, and the Loong Palace in Beijing.

Other highlights include temples, shopping districts, historic museums such as the Terracotta Warriors Museum, and an evening show in Xian, where tour guests will learn to make Chinese dumplings by hand, enjoy a full dumpling banquet, and a one-hour evening show of traditional Chinese dance and music.

In addition to these luxury hotels along the tour, visitors will experience China's history through a bi-lingual tour guide, see evening dinner shows, and take side trips to some of the above mentioned museums, walls, and palaces.

As stated, this one-of-a kind tour is a dry run for Spring Tour, to make any adjustments necessary in the side trips, transportation, and hotels that aren't US-grade accessible. Without a law like the ADA in this country, it is up to the individual management operators to decide on access, which is a little more varying that Americans are used to. Upon seeing the needs of this first group of travelers and the disability travel experts that are attending the tour, Spring Tour will begin to repeat the tour and expand upon it as well.

Individual prices start at \$1599 plus taxes and visas, and include airfare from San Francisco, hotels, transportation, and some of the side tours. For more information on the tour, please contact Jimmy Deng atytbchina@spring-tour.com, (800) 627-0886.



THE ADVENTURER

LEGENDS OF THE DEEP

In lieu of highlighting just one of our fellow thrill-seeking adventurers, this issue highlights both an upcoming all new event and the adventurers it will see.

Following our annual ski camp this coming January, we are supplementing yet another day in the glorious backcountry that neighbors Steamboat Ski area with even more neck-deep powder.

The 1st annual Legends of the Deep Powder Invitational is one of a kind, and before you 'hounds get too excited, the invite list is full.

There isn't anything else like this out there. Sure Warren Miller's team has thrown a monoskier or two into his famous epic choking-on-the-powder flicks, and sure, monoskiers have the newly-added MonoCross to the extreme competitions of the XGames. But never before has there been a backcountry powder competition with advanced monoskiers, three trackers and snowboarders that tests their skills in the powder.

And who better than Access Anything to host this event? We are proudly teaming up with our friends at Adaptive Adventures and Steamboat Powdercats to bring the first annual Legends of the Deep to Steamboat Springs, along with PM Gear who are providing the burly "Bro Model" skis and Right Skool Productions who's bringing the HD video equipment. Stay tuned for this event to take us into the next stratosphere of Adventure, folks.

Among the adventurers slotted for this event are XGames Bronze Medalist monoskier Sam Ferguson from Aspen and Paralympic World Champion three tracker Greg Mannino.



We are still looking for sponsors for Legends of the Deep.

Please contact us if you'd like to be a part of this unique and ground breaking inaugural event.

ask@accessanything.net

- See you in the DEEP

Traveler's Calendar

November

26: Opening Day, Steamboat Ski Area

December

25: Santa Clause!

January

12-15 4th Annual All Mountain Ski Camp, Steamboat Springs CO

16: 1st Annual Legends of the Deep Powder Invitational, Steamboat Springs, CO

February

20: Arizona Disability Expo, Phoenix AZ

March

21-23: 1st Annual Kids Ski Camp, Steamboat Springs, CO

Online Destinations

OUR NEWEST BLOGS:

<http://ckconsultingonline.blogspot.com/>

Weekly updates in Marketing to People with Disabilities

<http://inthedeepsbt.blogspot.com> - New snow updates to an on-mountain view of Craig

[Our Facebook Ski Camp Cause](#) – If you're on Facebook, pass our cause along to friends!

Access Escapes: <http://www.accessibleescapes.com/>

Live Scribe, never miss a word: <http://www.livescribe.com>

Venture Magazine, the only travel mag for PWD: <http://www.venturetrav.com>

Destination Motivation

Video Clip: Exoskeleton suit helps paralyzed people walk
paralyzed for the past 20 years, former Israeli paratrooper Radi Kaiof
now walks down the street with a dim mechanical hum.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/26391953/from/ET/>

The Crip's Tip



Craig in Lake George, NY with his nephew Mario

Tips on Early Season Skiing

I don't know about the rest of you, but early season skiing can often be a painful experience if you are not prepared. And by prepared, I mean being in shape. I never worried about these things when I was younger, but nowadays it is essential to be hitting the gym at least a month before the slopes open. For me it's a steady regimen of arms, shoulders and stomach exercises. But if you can't muster the motivation to do anything else, at least make sure you are strengthening your core. Any athlete knows that this is the key to success and more importantly to NOT getting hurt. If you want to last the whole season, dust off those work out clothes and hit the gym today!

See you in the deep!

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