



Media Relations Boost All Outdoors Message

By Paul Beachnau

June 2023 - As we tidy up the final details for next week's golf media fam tour (short for familiarization), I thought it would be an opportune time to discuss one of the areas that our Tourism Bureau experiences much success in and extends our marketing reach substantially.

Throughout the year, the Bureau puts a great deal of effort into contacting, hosting, visiting, and cultivating relationships with members of the media both in state and nationwide. In the past month alone, I was able to meet with representatives from Behind the Mitten Radio show, Meredith Publications, TV 9&10 News, IHeartMedia, Fox 17 TV – Grand Rapids, Public Broadcasting, and the River Radio Grand Rapids.

In each case, I talk about and share the amazing outdoor tourism assets we have in Gaylord. In addition to promoting Gaylord, it broadens a dimension of our marketing program that is often more valuable than a direct media campaign. In the case of hosting media and meeting with them on air, we receive an endorsement from a third-party impartial celebrity that usually has a following of their own. These spots are considerably more valuable than running an advertisement.

Not only do we host members of the media in Gaylord during every season, but I will often go on the road for what is known as an outbound media tour. We are extremely fortunate to utilize one of the best Public Relations specialists in Michigan, Susan Wilcox Olson of Grand Bay Promotions, to coordinate these tours. Over the years, Susan has developed hundreds of valuable media relationships throughout Michigan and the US. With her expertise and connections, she schedules us for interviews with media sources seeking relevant travel story lines that align with our tourism product in Gaylord.

Whether hosting media guests in our community or visiting them in-studio, these connections are an invaluable part of our overall marketing program. Promoting Gaylord as the ultimate outdoor destination for every season comes easily with our array of outdoor activities, but having media professionals support our mission adds a level of credibility to back that statement up!