



Ted's Vibe

DINING at Vibe in Goulburn Street Sydney at their *curve* café the other day with Toga's

Tess Anderson & Florence Sandford, it was hard not to notice the sizeable teddy bear dining at a nearby table.

It turned out to be Ted, the brain child (as opposed to the



natural child) of *curve's* F&B manager and minder, Timo.

Popular with many patrons, Ted is available to sit with lone diners and is a big hit with kids.

"We've even had a group of businessmen invite him to dine with them," said Timo.

"He's been featured in videos and he gets dressed up for special occasions such as the Half Marathon, the Mardi Gras and for the weddings he's been invited to attend in the hotel."

After a busy day, you will find Ted reclining on *curve's* rather comfy lounge - *Jill*.

Abu Dhabi information

EVERYTHING you wanted to know about Abu Dhabi but didn't have the information at your fingertips is now available through Abu Dhabi Tourism in the form of a Business Tourism Planners guide.

The informative guide lists the hotels available activities and convention offerings, in fact everything to assist with planning a conference, incentive or meeting.

To obtain a copy email - mice@abudhabitourism.com.au.

Facing technology challenges

THE question, how to meet the technology challenges facing convention centres around the world, will be one addressed by Mark Haley, president of Smart City Networks the largest provider of event technology in the convention industry in the United States, at the International Association of Congress Centres (AIPC) Annual Conference being held in Amsterdam, Netherlands, 2-4 July.

Haley, a veteran of 30 years of the meetings and conventions industry, will join a panel discussing the need to maintain technology in a cost-effective manner given the explosive growth of mobile data needs.

The session will provide a range of perspectives on which technologies are most in demand, and how they can be delivered in a way that is consistent with budget limitations and revenue expectations.

Vanuatu winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Griet Thijs, Corporate Traveller Brisbane who is last month's major prize winner of the Vanuatu competition.

She has won Air Vanuatu return flights to Port Vila and five nights accommodation in a Harbour View Room including continental breakfast daily at the Grand Hotel and Casino.

Thijs is off to Vanuatu for correctly answering all 12 questions and having the most creative answer to 'Tell us why The Grand and Vanuatu offer a great theme for meetings and incentives.

Good access from mainland Australia, enough meeting space for mid-size groups, good size hotel, exclusivity, different, charming, good location, fantastic value for money, I could definitely see myself organising my next event there.

"The convention business truly has become a global industry," said Haley.

"I appreciate the opportunity to share the experience that Smart City Networks has gained as the leading event technology provider in the United States.

"Many of the connectivity challenges facing the convention industry are universal, and this discussion will help to further develop solutions that meet our customers changing technology needs."

In addition to Haley, panelists will include Ben Buurke, managing director of Eventresult, and Pim Schoonderwoerd, special product manager at the Amsterdam RAI Convention Centre.

AIPC is the industry association for professional convention and exhibition center managers worldwide."

AIPC is committed to encouraging and recognising excellence in convention centre management, while at the same time providing the tools to achieve such high standards through its research, educational and networking programs.

It is a true international organisation, with representation from over 53 countries around the world.

Mackay full page

CHECK out **page 4** of day's issue which showcases business events in Mackay.

Book your next meeting, conference or event in the Queensland destination online at mackayconventionbureau.com or by phone on 07 4944 5855.



Ovations Stage a first

AN industry first will take place during Ovations National Speaker Showcase 2012, when they partner with Staging Connections to present a number of high profile corporate speakers to a whole new audience via the use of webcasting technology.

Each of the events to be held at the Hilton in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney (21, 26 and 28 June respectively) will be live via webcast utilising an advanced level of interactivity.

Attendees both physical and virtual will be able to engage with the speakers via twitter integration (#OShowcase).

"We are thrilled to establish a partnership with Staging Connections to offer the National Speaker Showcase 2012 to an even wider audience than ever before.

"Between us we hold a synergy in our appreciation of innovation and the opportunity to work together to offer it to our clients just made sense," said Leanne Christie, ceo of Ovations (below).



Register now for CIBTM

CIBTM (China Incentive, Business Travel & Meetings Exhibition), which takes place from 12-14 September at Beijing's China National Convention Centre, has opened its hosted buyer and visitor registration.

The event which attracted more than 4,400 industry professionals and 300 hosted buyers and over 7,500 pre-scheduled appointments, last year, is set to provide a similar business environment.



business events news

22nd June 2012



YOU'LL need stamina and a few gallons of water for Jordan's Full Moon Desert Marathon, a 42km course through the vast expanse of Wadi Rum.

The gruelling annual event, sponsored by Royal Jordanian Airlines, was run in May through this beautiful yet demanding desert terrain.

Historically, T. E. Lawrence took three days in a dash from Wadi Rum to Mudawarra on a racing camel to cut the Hejaz railway line.

Wadi Rum was also used in the 1962 film, 'Lawrence of Arabia' starring Peter O'Toole.

Prof Fels speaks out

FORMER head of the ACCC, now chairman of the Taxi Industry Inquiry, Professor Allan Fels will present his findings on Victoria's taxi and hire care industry when he speaks at the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) AUS/NZ 2012 Conference, to be held at The Westin Sydney 26-28 August.

Forming part of the long overdue enquiry and a 12 month probe by Prof Fels, he examines questions often complained about - overcharging, fraudulent transactions, ad hoc service and most of all, lack of competition.

Whilst only being pushed in the State of Victoria it will likely have a knock-on-effect in other major cities.

Chris Telfer, chair of the GBTA Australia/New Zealand board said, "It is fantastic that Professor Allan Fels will be delivering this compelling session to the delegates at the annual conference.

"He is amongst some great speakers, although it is undoubtedly going to be a highlight of day one."

Topics and key speakers include: The Future of the Global Economy, delivered by Ross Dawson & Crisis Management & Angela Hart, Princes Margaret Hospital, Christchurch.

Those interested in working with GBTA should contact emontgomery@gbta.org

Parks in Aust focus

WORKING with the Australian Government and New South Wales Parks, a substantial once in a 10 year event, the IUCN World Parks Congress has been secured by Business Events Sydney (BESydney).

To be held at Sydney Olympic Park in 2014, it is expected to attract 3,000 delegates and inject around \$24 million into the New South Wales economy.

Considered a huge coup for Australia, the event represents an outstanding opportunity to profile the nation's impressive conservation achievements and expertise to the world.

The international assessment panel was particularly impressed by the facilities and green spaces on offer at Sydney Olympic Park.

"Securing the IUCN World Parks Congress has involved both a whole-of-industry and whole-of-government approach.

"It is brilliant to see this hard work return such a favourable result for Australia," said Lyn Lewis-Smith, ceo of Business Events Sydney.

"The event will deliver an estimated \$24 million for our visitor economy.

"It will also see world conservation leaders gather in Sydney to debate, innovate and collaborate on the most pragmatic solutions to conservation and developmental change," she said.

Earlier this week, Rotary International also announced that its 2014 International Convention will move to Sydney Olympic Park, a win that Alan Marsh, ceo, Sydney Olympic Park Authority said demonstrates the quality and flexibility of their business event facilities.



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MCI'S PCO Roadshow

MCI's president, Asia Pacific and ceo of the Association Division, Robin Lokerman, is making a dedicated visit to Australia to share insights with association leaders and the Australian events industry and to launch its specialist Meetings & Events Division in Sydney.

To be held on 26 June at an exclusive function at the Museum of Contemporary Art, the theme of the evening will be 'Building Community & Sustainability', in line with MCI's position as the events industry's thought-leader in sustainable meetings.

"There are some key challenges that keep practitioners, professors and association executives awake at night when they think of their association's activities," said Lokerman on the importance of this trip.

These questions include: How do I attract 20% of my audience



from Asia?

How can I create more revenue streams?

What are other successful associations doing around the world to stay relevant?

"I am looking forward to answering these and more," he said.

The roadshow, which takes the MCI association experts to Brisbane, Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne from 25-29 June, will host more than 200 of Australia's most influential practitioners.

WIN AN ESCAPE TO EMIRATES WOLGAN VALLEY RESORT & SPA



During the months of June and July, *Business Events News* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win an amazing two-night stay at the exclusive Emirates **Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa** in the Blue Mountains.

The prize includes a two-night stay for two people in a Heritage Suite with breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Non-alcoholic beverages with all meals and selected regional wines and beer with lunch and dinner are also included, as are two outdoor activities each day.

Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa is located on a 4000-acre nature reserve adjacent to the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains and only 190kms from Sydney. The resort offers 40 stand-alone luxury suites, each with its own private verandah & swimming pool.

To enter simply email your answers to each question by 27th July 2012

Q.3:Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa is how far from Sydney?

Hint: wolganvalley.com

Email your answers to: wolgan@businesseventsnews.com.au

[Click here for terms & conditions](#)



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Alana Tilley to Sonaisali

SONAISALI Island Resort, Fiji has announced the appointment of Alana Tilly as sales and marketing manager.



Moving from Australia to Fiji, Tilley brings with her extensive knowledge of business development and in particular e-commerce and online marketing.

Sonaisali Island Resort's managing director, Aaron McGrath said "We are very excited to welcome Alana to our team at Sonaisali Island Resort.

"Not only will she bring a new and exciting focus on business development, but also be an innovative leader for the sales team."

In profile

Samuel Wong – All the right moves



SAMUEL Wong is an Australian born Singaporean who revels in his role as a concierge at Sydney's Fraser Suites - the people he meets and the hustle and bustle of hotel life.

However that's not all he does, for in addition to his life as a concierge Wong owns a fledgling 'young adults lifestyle service and hospitality group' – BE Hospitality, a business and events company he runs with a group of his friends.

The company organises tailor-made travel and events for small groups of between 5 and 8 people.

Primarily aimed at those in the 18-30 year age group, Wong explained, "We see ourselves as young professionals who want the best of the best, so even if a client has money or little money we can create something to suit their budget."

Right now Wong says they are keeping the business small and running it as a not-for-profit venture until they gain enough

experience to take it to the next level.

"We act as the sales and marketing arm for our suppliers and Virgin Australia with whom we package up people's ideas for travel and for parties."

Wong's events and parties, he is quick to point out are not to be confused with alcohol fuelled, all-night rages, "I don't do dodgy events," he said.

When it comes to the sort of hotels he uses, Wong sites those in a mid to high range.

"We don't do backpacking or anything of the bed bug variety.

"In the year and a half we have been doing this, we have organised trips to the Barrier Reef, Melbourne, NZ & Singapore."

You can only suspect that this is the tip of the iceberg as ideas keep bubbling to the surface as he speaks.

Samuel Wong we suspect is a name to remember and someone who is going places - see www.behgroup.net.

Mövenpick Resort & Spa, Dead Sea

It's something of a surreal moment to be sipping a cocktail at the Mövenpick Resort & Spa Dead Sea, flanked by mountains to the east and the rolling hills of Jerusalem to the west, and reflect on the fact that you have entered an ancient history time warp.

This is especially so when you learn that King Herod and the Egyptian Queen Cleopatra bathed in the incredibly buoyant waters of the Dead Sea which lies a few steps away from where you are sitting and where you floated buoyantly today.

Deep in the Jordan Valley and 55 km southeast of Amman, it is an area that is believed to have been home to five Biblical cities: Sodom, Gomorrah, Adman, Zebouin and Zoar and that down the road a clip, John the Baptist was beheaded and Moses stood on Mt Nebo and saw the vast panorama that encompasses the Jordan River Valley, the Dead Sea, Jericho and Jerusalem.

Although sparsely populated and serenely quiet now, the result of former conflicts across the Dead Sea, a series of new roads, hotels and archaeological discoveries are enticing international visitors to this fascinating region, as it did to kings, emperors, traders and prophets in antiquity.

Seaside facilities include modern hotels with therapeutic clinics and restaurant/bathing/sports complexes, a purpose-built conference centre - the King Hussein Bin Talal Convention Centre, managed by Hilton and meeting facilities in all the major hotels, such as the 5Star Mövenpick.

With its wow factor architectural design straight out of a traditional Arabian village, the Mövenpick Resort's grounds are interspersed with waterways, lush gardens and towering palm trees, a sharp contrast to the dry, arid landscape in which it sits.

346 tastefully designed rooms have spacious stone balconies while others have terraces that either look to the sea, gardens or mountains.

A feature of the hotel is its convention centre with two ballrooms and a conference room for up to 1,500 people.

There are five breakout rooms, a Roman theatre for more than 500, a Beach Lounge for a maximum of 350 guests and an auditorium for up to 198.

With a seemingly endless array of restaurants and bars, with spectacular international and Middle Eastern cuisine, the Mövenpick could only be described as sublime.

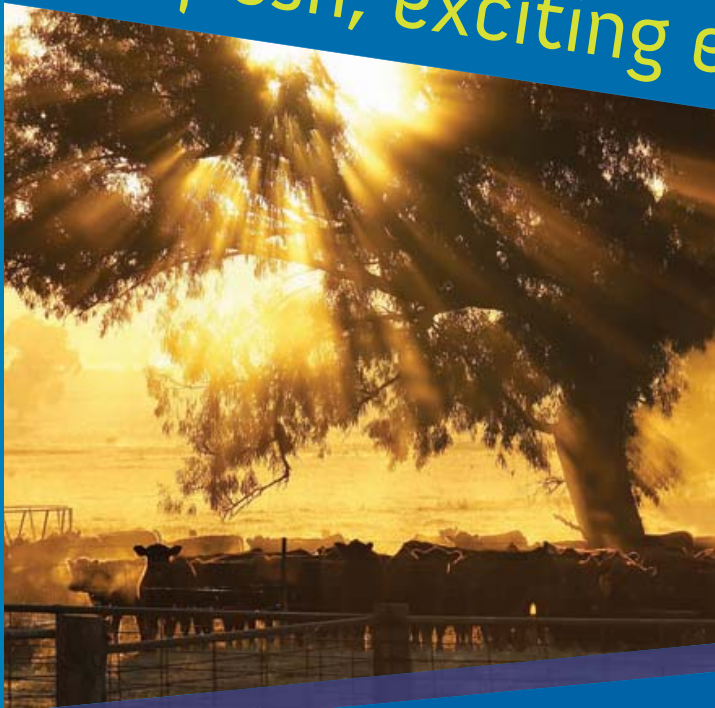
Then, for pure indulgence there's their Zara Spa, one of the largest spas in the Middle East, with more than 70 treatments dedicated to luxury, pampering, relaxation and wellness including a therapy center for prophylaxis, treatments and rehabilitation.



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