

postcards

by debbi calabrese



'Crickets' – but only for now!

Travel industry encompasses so many, but we will rebound

First, I'd like to thank everyone who has called or emailed to ask how our Embassy Travel agency is doing during the Covid-19 outbreak, also known as coronavirus. Your concern for our continued longevity is greatly appreciated and especially comforting.

The gifts of baked goodies and flowers brought smiles to our weary faces!

It has been a couple of very busy weeks calming the fears of travelers, canceling a year's worth of travel arrangements, and waiting for the day when the spread of Covid-19 has slowed.

With the majority of our passenger concerns and changes now resolved, it's so quiet that sometimes, we believe we can actually hear the crickets chirping. Our small pity party lasted for a day or two and then we realized that we should and need to look toward the future. We anticipate that future to be very busy as the pent up demand for vacations will need to be sated.

First, we need to address and assuage the rumors of a travel ban. There currently is NO travel ban. There is a Global Level 3 Advisory in place in which our government has advised against visiting certain countries with a high level of infected places.

"The Department of State advises U.S. citizens to reconsider travel abroad due to the global impact of COVID-19. Many areas throughout the world are now experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks and taking action that may limit traveler mobility, including quarantines and border restrictions. Even countries, jurisdictions, or areas where cases have not been reported may restrict travel without notice."

As of this writing, there are no travel bans for Americans. It is the United States that is banning the admission of residents from other countries. Currently, that number has reached 30, including two of our closest friends, the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Secondly, we and the travel industry as a whole have survived other catastrophes and we will survive this. It's very important for us and the entire sector of travel-related services to rebound as quickly as possible as one in 10 jobs in the United States is rooted in the travel industry.

Transportation sectors include not just airlines and cruise ships, but all of the supporting employees who ensure your safety, clean the vessels and airplanes. It also includes those who process your luggage at both the air-

ports and the resorts that receive American guests.

Limos and cabs, buses and rail are impacted by the lack of travelers who will not arrive. It trickles down to bell hops and those jobs that you don't notice until they disappear, such as those who pour your unlimited drinks or prepare your food for buffets or restaurants, or the housekeepers who make up and turn down your bed.

It will also impact those who earn a living by creating local crafts for you to purchase and treasure as future memories. This is not a trickle-down situation, it's a downpour. The economic effects of this are likely to be felt for several years.

The travelers who canceled their trips before the ban went into effect likely had to pay penalties. It's not known if previously denied claimants can now file for retroactive relief and reimbursement. If you fall into this category, I would strongly suggest that you try to have your case reopened. The answer might remain "no," however I'm a firm believer that the answer is always "no" unless you ask.

The good news is that we will rebound. By "we" I mean the travel industry, the U.S.A. and even little ole

Embassy Travel in little ole Hopewell Junction.

It's just a matter of time. Indeed, many of our passengers have chosen to migrate their trip to 2021 (and even 2022). America's lust for travel is almost a birthright for us.

Whether it's an ocean cruise or a visit to the magical parks in Orlando, or returning to Europe, we will once again pack our collective bags, head for the airport or cruise ship and go boldly forward to discover new places and enjoy new adventures.

Until that day, feel free to stop in and say "hi." We would enjoy the company!

Debbi Calabrese, owner of Embassy Travel in Hopewell Junction, writes about travel experiences on an every-other-week basis. She has more than 30 years of experience in the travel industry. Embassy Travel specializes in vacations, honeymoons and destination weddings.

For more information, visit Debbi at Embassy Travel at 871A Route 82 in Hopewell Junction. Call 845-221-5000 or visit the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/embassytravel.

The Stissing Center postpones Spring Series in support of national effort to confront coronavirus

The Board of Directors and staff of The Stissing Center (TSC) have announced the postponement of their planned Spring Series of events due to the recent spread of the coronavirus. TSC cited its concern for the health and safety of the audiences, performers, volunteers, staff and the entire community as the driving force behind the decision.

"Needless to say, we are all disappointed in the short term," said TSC Board Chair, Jack Banning. "But after careful consideration, internal discussions and examining WHO and CDC guidelines, we all feel this is the right move at this time."

"We were in the final stages of putting together an exciting, diverse series of events that we were sure everyone would enjoy," said TSC Executive Director, Brian Keeler. "We'd planned on announcing the series this week, with performances to begin in late April. We will now look to book this series for a later time. We'll continue to reassess over the coming months and plan accordingly."

During this pause in programming, TSC will continue with necessary construction and renovation in preparation

for year-round programming.

"We are presently busy constructing a second space for performances and meetings in the lower level of the building called 'The Cellar at the Center,'" Keeler said. "That work won't stop. Also, we'll continue to fundraise and work on bringing HVAC to the larger auditorium. Although we are hitting the

pause button on performances, it's full speed ahead on the construction.

"These actions are in support of the larger, national effort to tackle this vexing problem," Keeler added. "Hopefully it will help 'flatten the curve,' which is a process of slowing the advance and lowering the peak level of the virus, an action advocated by

healthcare experts and infectious disease professionals."

Banning cited TSC's larger vision: "This decision fits with our mission of supporting the community's well being. In this case, with so many unknowns, it is through actions like this that we can help protect public health."

this week's puzzle solutions

This week's answer

SUDOKU

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Binix solution

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