

# A Fresh Look At Nebraska



# -Isms

By LuAnn Schindler

Greetings from St. Augustine, FL!

Consider this column your postcard. Bold, white letters proclaim where I'm at, along with a picture of me with a silly alligator, waving like a Cornhusker tourist.

Actually, I'm one of 15 journalists and photographers from across the U.S. selected for a PR trip.

I started dictating my column at 7 a.m. Monday, while driving to Eppley Airfield.

I didn't encounter any storm. The worst stretch of road was a slushy-icy conglomeration from I-680 to the airport.

Kind-of-an-off-topic-segue: I enjoy flying. I always envisioned landing a job that allowed travel. The school bus wasn't what I visualized. Being a journalist lets me travel when I choose to, or in this case, when I'm chosen. It's better than George Clooney's "Up in the Air" character that seems stuck at the airport – Eppley, to be exact.

Return-to-Nebraskaisms segue: The purpose of a PR or familiarization trip is to introduce journalists to the highlights in a specific region.

Journalists place articles in publications or online sites.

The bottom line: the articles draw enough attention and tourists flock to the locations.

St. Augustine is the oldest European city in the States, and it's a dazzling city, especially at night. Ponce de Leon visited the region in 1513, and the first establishment was here, nearly a half century before Jamestown.

While in the Sunshine State, journalists stay in one of the five Inns of Elegance, five romantic bed and breakfast inns in the historic district. Our group has the opportunity to tour the Fountain of Youth, Lighthouse and Museum, Old St. Augustine Village, San Sebastian Winery, Spanish Military Hospital, the Spanish Quarter, the World Golf Hall of Fame, Claude's Chocolates and Ripley's Museum.

We can kayak or take an eco-boat tour through inland waterways. Side note: I thought about kayaking, but Scott tells me I'm too clumsy. He's probably right. The boat tour is spectacular!

The group experienced uniquely-themed and world-renowned restaurants: Tini Martini Bar (fantastic jazz music), O.C. Whites (in one of the city's first hotels), Taste of Raintree (marriage proposal central) and Bistro de Leon (a French café run by a talented and world-famous French chef).

St. Augustine is honeymoon haven.

It's a family vacation destination.

And it makes me wonder what sights are "must-see" hot spots in Nebraska?

If 15 journalists from across the U.S. were to tour our beautiful state, what spots should be viewed, where should they dine, which bed and breakfast inns distinctively define Nebraska?

The Nebraska Travel and Tourism department divides Nebraska into seven regions: Frontier Trails, Lewis & Clark, Metro, Panhandle, Pioneer Country, Prairie Lakes, and Sandhills. Our state boasts nine scenic byways.

And this summer, VisitNebraska.gov reminds residents and visitors to "Rediscover the Road Trip."

I've traveled all areas, and I couldn't limit myself to one site within each region. We live in such a diverse state. Choosing one attraction, restaurant, or lodging choice severely limits a non-resident's P.O.V.

I'm curious. What "required visiting" represents the true spirit of Nebraska?

Follow LuAnn on Facebook or Twitter - @luannschindler or email her at [luann@gpcom.net](mailto:luann@gpcom.net).