



January 12, 2026

Though our original intent was to send out this message last week, we saw a flurry of activity in our own inboxes and figured you might be dealing with the same. So, we decided to sit on this project for a few days and give you some time to get caught up after the holidays.

By now we hope you've managed to jump into 2026 with fresh energy and a splash of enthusiasm. It felt like (and we heard from a lot of you that) 2025 was the most challenging time that journalists and PR pros have had to endure – including those COVID years! – so congrats to all of us for making it through. Here's hoping that 2026 feels a little better for everyone.

We want to do our part to kick things off on a high note by sharing some highlights from each of our clients. We hope you'll find these newsy nuggets helpful, and we encourage you to reach out if we can provide further details about anything you read today.

We take the “relations” part of our job titles seriously, and what we love the most about our work is the connections we have with you. In that spirit, feel free to respond to this message with updates of your own so we know what you're working on and how we can be helpful.

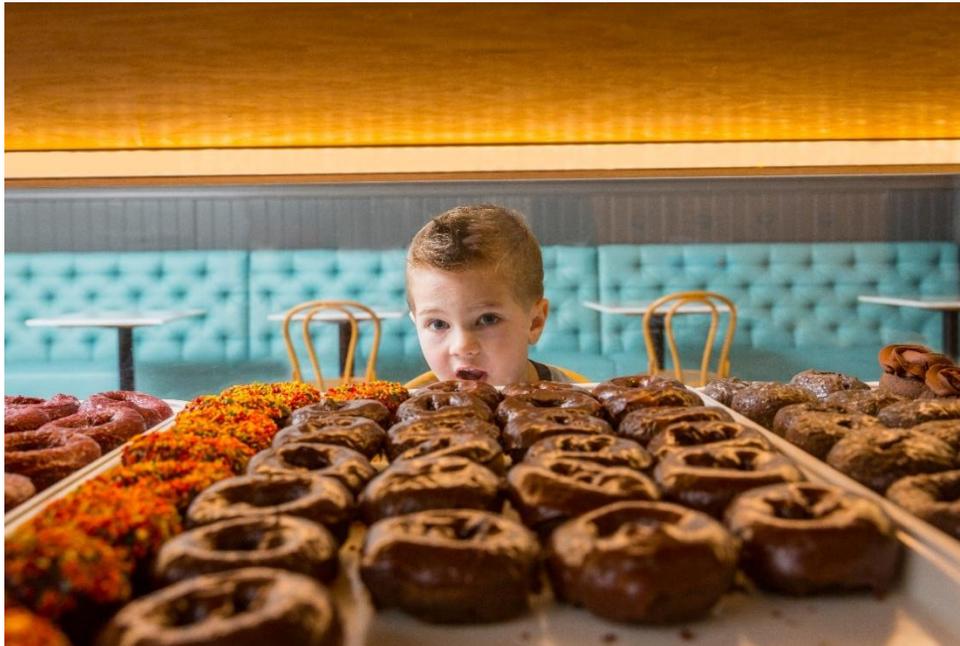
The entire MBPR team looks forward to working with you this year!

Best, Rachel, Mallory, Sara and Mindy (as pictured, left to right)



Announcing Two New Clients

Travel Butler County, Ohio: It's been a couple of years since we've had a client in the Midwest, so we're excited to welcome this one to the MBPR family. Butler County is located just north of Cincinnati, and it's home to a [6.5-acre grocery store](#) that must be seen to be believed, a [Donut Trail](#) that has generated global recognition, a [classic drive-in theater](#), a museum that pays tribute to the [Voice of America](#), and a one-of-a-kind [outdoor sculpture park](#) that can be explored via golf cart. Our team is looking forward to discovering all we can about this destination and we invite you to do the same! *Note: They'll be at IMM in New York later this month. If you'll be there, too, let us know and we can connect you.*



Credit: Travel Butler County

C&O Canal Trust's Canal Quarters: The trust is a nonprofit partner that works with the National Park Service (NPS) to preserve the natural beauty, history and recreational opportunities along the historic [Chesapeake & Ohio \(C&O\) Canal](#), which is the most visited national historical park operated by the NPS. The canal follows the Potomac River for 184.5 miles, stretching from Georgetown in Washington, D.C., to the town of Cumberland in western Maryland. Hikers and cyclists follow the same towpath once trod by mules that pulled canal boats filled with supplies. As the canal was built, lockhouses were set up every few miles, serving as homes for the lock keepers and milestones for the boat captains. A handful of these 200-year-old lockhouses have been rehabilitated to serve as ["Canal Quarters,"](#) overnight accommodations available to anyone exploring the towpath, and they offer a rare opportunity to stay in an original historic structure right inside a National Park site.

And Here's What Our Other Clients Are Up To!

DESTINATIONS

Alabama's Beaches: Coastal Alabama is where you'll find the Gulf-side towns of Gulf Shores, Orange Beach and Fort Morgan. Beyond incredible seafood (no kidding: you MUST try Royal Red shrimp!), this area also prides itself on a commitment to responsible tourism. [Gulf State Park](#) is one of those state parks that should be a national park, and a variety of facilities in and around the park ensure that visitors can learn about the beach environment around them and become invested in protecting it. If a quintessential beach road trip is on your 2026 bucket list, here's a list of [250 reasons to visit](#).

Allegany County, The Mountain Side of Maryland: America's 250th birthday is a great time to take a closer look at this region of Western Maryland. This was a young nation's transportation hub back in the 1800s, with rail lines, the famed C&O Canal (mentioned above), and America's first federally funded highway converging in the mountain town of Cumberland. The town where George Washington began his military career is still appealing to modern-day travelers, who can book a stay at the brand-new [Wills Hotel](#), a fresh boutique property in the heart of the recently restored downtown. We also just learned about an interesting project involving seedlings from one of the original Liberty Trees ... and we're eager to tell you all about it!

Bowling Green, Kentucky: If you think Kentucky is strictly focused on horses and bourbon, think again. The state's third-largest city is the gateway to Kentucky's "cave country." In fact, you can enjoy a unique take on summer movies shown on [cave walls](#) here! This is also the only place in the world where Corvettes are manufactured, making it a fitting home for the [National Corvette Museum](#). A few luminaries, including [Duncan Hines](#) and horror film director [John Carpenter](#), spent their formative years in Bowling Green. But today, the real stars are those sparkling above [Mammoth Cave National Park](#), an International Dark Sky Park.

Louisiana's Cajun Bayou: Lafourche Parish, Louisiana, reminds you that [Mardi Gras](#) falls on Tuesday, February 17 this year, and this region in the southeast corner of the state (less than 45 minutes from New Orleans) is home to the [Louisiana King Cake Festival](#). Keep that in mind as you plan Mardi Gras coverage this year! And in a year when we're celebrating what really sets America apart, we feel compelled to draw your attention to the incredible array of [Cajun culture](#) – from food to music to boat-building and sporting events – that this pocket of Louisiana honors every day, in every way.



Credit: Louisiana's Cajun Bayou

Louisiana's Sweet Spot: Ascension Parish, Louisiana, is located smack-dab between the big cities of New Orleans and Baton Rouge, right along Interstate 10 ... but it's miles away in terms of the kind of experiences you can have here. The region earned its nickname from the sugarcane grown here and that shows up in everything from artisan toffee to craft spirits. In 2026, our attention is focused on the [River Road African American History Museum](#), which will return to its original location following significant repairs and improvements after storm damage, and whose staff is also working hard to restore an [old social hall](#) that boasts significant ties to jazz music.

Shenandoah County, Virginia: Located within Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, this county is rich in history, agritourism and outdoor recreation. Every season is stunning here, but since we're in the thick of winter right now, we'll tell you that [Bryce Resort](#) is the perfect place to teach kids how to fall in love with skiing (and also just how to fall). Speaking of fall ... autumn is our favorite time to visit, because you can choose from a dozen different ways to actively enjoy leaf-peeping in the Blue Ridge Mountains. No matter what time of year you visit, though, the county's many [wineries](#) are ready to roll out the red (and white and rosé) carpet.



Rendering Credit: The Dollywood Company

ATTRACTIONS

Dollywood: Dolly Parton officially opened her theme park in May 1986, and this year she's introducing the biggest attraction investment in Dollywood's history. [NightFlight Expedition](#) is a unique ride that combines elements of a roller coaster with those of a water ride ... all indoors, meaning that it can operate in any season and any type of weather. The new attraction celebrates the unique natural beauty of the Great Smoky Mountains, allowing parkgoers to fully immerse themselves in the place where Dolly was born and raised, and which continues to inspire her. Since one day simply isn't enough in the park, Dolly has two award-winning and family-friendly [resorts](#) that offer the perfect place to stay overnight.

RESORTS

The Otesaga Resort Hotel: A proud member of the Historic Hotels of America, this legendary property dates to 1909 and is the ideal home base for visitors exploring [Cooperstown, New York](#). It was founded and is still owned by the same family that operates the [National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum](#), and it's located down the street from the old homestead where American author James Fenimore Cooper lived. His most famous book, *The Last of the Mohicans*, marks its 200th anniversary this year.

Sunset at the Palms: This adults-only, all-inclusive resort in Negril, Jamaica, weathered Hurricane Melissa back in October and is happily welcoming guests who are eager to escape winter weather for the warm temperatures and even warmer hospitality that greets them here. The boutique resort boasts 85 treehouse-style guest rooms and offers both the expected beach and water that's found at most Caribbean resorts, as well as an unexpected jungle-like garden that shows the other side of what makes Jamaica such a beautiful island.



Credit: Sunset at the Palms

Happy travels! We look forward to working with you in 2026!