“It’s beautiful, you’re going to love it there”—the prediction was bold and assured. And it wasn’t the only one. In fact, more than a dozen people who I’ve talked to about the upcoming SAC convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico, have visited this locale. They’ve raved about the city—and have thoughtfully considered attending our October convention based on location alone.

I’ve been to at least 10 SAC conventions, and I think we’ve made the perfect choice for 2012. Not only is Albuquerque picturesque, a southwestern architectural gem with a hint of the “wild west,” your SAC board has been busy lining up quality keynote speakers and top-notch professionals for our workshops. But I’ll get to that in a minute. Here’s a little bit about our New Mexican destination.

Albuquerque is the largest city in the state of New Mexico, United States. It’s situated in the central part of the state. The Rio Grande River runs right through it, north to south. According to the 2010 Census, the city population was 545,852.

Albuquerque was founded in 1706 as the Spanish colonial outpost of Ranchos de Albuquerque—where 18 families from Spain resided. Present-day Albuquerque retains much of its historical Spanish cultural heritage. There are famed restaurants, 19 museums, resorts, and, of course the annual Albuquerque International Balloon Festival.

The city’s motto, “It’s a Trip,” may be, according to MSNBC.com contributor Chris Rodell, “the most potent promotional use of eight letters in marketing history. Straight-arrow nostalgics will associate it with vehicular traffic along old Route 66 that cuts...
right through town. And the Sandia Peak Tramway is a wonderful little trip up a scenic mountain (http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/41745003/ns/ travel-destination/travel/these-city-slogans-are-mouthful-something/). And this slogan can have other meanings, reports Rodell, “Albuquerque is a creative place where people can escape to and enjoy a whole new reality,” says Megan Mayo of the Albuquerque CVB (www.itsatrip.org).”

I like the idea of going to a place where people can take time out of their regular schedules, not to escape and enjoy a new reality, but where they can grow, be creative, and take away something new—something that invigorates and inspires them to greater service.

Isn’t that why we do what we do— as Christian communicators? In sharing our stories, through various platforms and mediums, we are called beyond just telling. We are called to communicate Christ. Whether we work for the church, or a secular institution, all we do should ultimately lead others to (at the very least) consider Christ. We can gain the knowledge and encouragement (at the very least) consider Christ.

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The SAC annual convention is a place where we can gain the knowledge and encouragement to do this. We can gain professional advantage—and personal growth. I’m excited about visiting Albuquerque (can you tell?), but more importantly, I’m excited about attending our presentations. We’ve lined up an amazingly diverse group of speakers whose keynote addresses and seminars will instruct, challenge, and motivate you (check out http://www.adventistcommunicator.org/article/4/albuquerque-new-mexico-2012. for details). And it’s all in a place prettier than a picture!

As SAC’s president, I urge you to make this destination city your destination this October 18-20. Take the trip, and learn how to soar to new heights!

SAC Convention registration, hotel and transportation


The Hotel

Albuquerque at Old Town

Will host the convention with rates of $99/night for single or double—ask for the Seventh-day Adventist rate (Group Code: 1210SOC17). Note: Room block will close on September 24, 2012.

Fly into Albuquerque International Sunport (ABQ) and get the shuttles from the airport to the hotel.

Get more information about the venue, transportation, and most importantly, the amazing seminars at http://www.adventistcommunicator.org/article/4/albuquerque-new-mexico-2012.

Highlights of the convention

- Outreach activity (stuffing animals for children on reservations and hospital)
- Hot air balloon ride (come early or stay late to enjoy a once-in-a-lifetime adventure)
- Close to Old Town with shops, restaurants, and city tours and a rich and colorful history
- Great food—all the typical southwest cuisine served authentically
- Tours (Thursday morning tours to enhance your profession)
- Photo op prior to banquet (added feature this year to remember event with your friends)
- Special seminars

Speakers

Friday morning keynote speaker: Julia Duin

Julia Duin (pronounced “Deehn”) is an accomplished writer and journalist who has worked for 5 newspapers, written five books, along with more magazine articles than she can count. She has chalked up 25 years full-time experience in journalism. More than 14 of those years were spent at The Washington Times, beginning in 1995. She began as culture page editor, then religion editor, winning many awards. She is currently writing regularly for the Washington Post, mainly on its Sunday magazine but also for travel and style sections. She earned a master’s degree in religion in 1992. In addition to working more than three years with the Houston Chronicle in the late 1980s, she put in a year-long stint as a city editor for The Daily Times in Farmington, NM in the mid-1990s. She fell in love with New Mexico then and has always longed to return.

A native of Baltimore, she received her bachelor’s degree at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, and her master’s degree at Pittsburgh’s Trinity Episcopal School. She gained national recognition as a correspondent for evangelical publications such as Christianity Today and Charisma.

She is not afraid to tackle tough topics and her first two books, which were on single Christians and sexuality, landed her on numerous radio and TV shows. Julia’s fourth book, Quitting Church: Why the Faithful are Fleeing and What to Do About It, came out in 2008, and has been her best-selling book to date.

Friday evening keynote speaker: DeVon Franklin

DeVon Franklin, a Seventh-day Adventist producer who is adamant about unpluging his life at sunset every Friday until Saturday at sunset to study his Bible and attend church, says, “I have put my faith front and center for everyone to see … not only has relying on my faith not harmed my career prospects, it has actually enhanced them.”

He currently serves as Vice President of Production for Columbia Pictures, a division of Sony Pictures Entertainment where he oversees the hit family comedy, Jumping the Broom. He was formerly a studio executive at MGM and got his start as an intern for Will Smith and James Lastie. DeVon has been a guest on countless TV shows, and has been featured in numerous newspapers, online blogs, and magazines including The Huffington Post, Fox Business News, Ebony, Essence and Christianity Today. He was named by The Hollywood Reporter as one of the top 55 executives under 35 and one of the top 10 industry impact players by the NAACP.

DeVon has written a book entitled, Produced by Faith: Enjoy Real Success without Losing Your True Self. It introduces a dynamic business model for building a thriving career without compromising one’s faith; the reader’s life is equated with the challenging process of making a movie.

Saturday morning speaker: John Lomacang

John Lomacang is a native of New York, where he received much of his education. He has been a professional Christian Singer for more than 28 years. Pastor John Lomacang is an ordained minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and is in his 25th year of pastoral ministry. He is presently the pastor of the Thompsonville Seventh-day Adventist Church located at the 3ABN Worship Center. He is a regular program host with 3ABN.

Saturday worship speaker: Costin Jordache

Costin Jordache serves as the assistant to the president for Communication in the Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Over the last 15 years he has served as senior pastor of the Dallas First Church, pastor for media at the Loma Linda University Church, general manager of the Texas Media Center, and adjunct instructor in Communication at Southwestern Adventist University. He holds a Masters degree in radio, television and film (RTF) as well as an MBA, along with an undergraduate degree in Theology.

Costin has produced a number of television and digital media projects and continues to push the creative envelope in an effort to enhance the kingdom of heaven. Costin is married to Leah Jordache, and they have two amazing boys, Roman and Lance.
Awards—Deadline July 2

It’s not too late to enter your best work, or that of someone else, in the field of communication. Visit www.adventistcommunicator.org/awards for entry guidelines. Award categories are:

**Corporate Communication**
- Best Constituency or Annual Report Video
- Best Constituency Report (Print) or Best Special Event
- Best Annual Report (Print)
- Best Web site

**New Media**
- Best App
- Best Email Newsletter
- Best Blog/Best Student Blog
- Best Use of Social Media

**Print**
- Best Newsletter (Print)
- Best Magazine
- Best Editorial
- Best Feature
- Best Devotional
- Best News Article for Event Coverage
- Best Column or Department
- Best Student Newspaper

**Broadcast**
- Best Radio Show or Podcast
- Best TV/Internet Show
- Best Video Story/Project

**Marketing/Public Relations**
- Best Exhibit or Display
- Best Promotional Video
- Best Brochure or Printed Promotional Package/Kit
- Best Ad (Print)
- Best Marketing Gift
- Best Media Pitching Campaign

**Design**
- Best Book Design
- Best Magazine Cover Design
- Best Magazine Design Overall
- Best Project Design
- Best Photograph

From the pool of winners, the awards committee will chose an overall Award of Excellence and the Reger Curting Smith Award for innovation and creativity.

Nominations for Lifetime Achievement, Student, and Young Professional awards are also being accepted. Email nominations or questions to info@adventistcommunicator.org.

We will announce the nominees and award winners at the SAC Awards Banquet, Saturday, October 20, in Albuquerque, NM. (Visit www.adventistcommunicator.org/article/152/accreditation/sac-awards/2011-award-winners for a list of the 2011 winners.)

Thank you for helping us honor those who continue to model excellence among Adventist communicators.