



# 2021 Convention Speaker Biographies

## *The New Travel Landscape & the Role Travel Agents Will Play in It.*

Tuesday, January 12<sup>th</sup> ~ 3:00 PM

Rainer Jenss brings a wealth of experience and expertise as the Founder of the Family Travel Association. Before putting his professional expertise and personal passion to the ultimate test by traveling around the world for a year with his wife and two young children in 2009, Rainer was a Vice President and thirteen-year veteran of the National Geographic Society. As Publisher of National Geographic Kids from 2002-2008, Jenss helped transform the publication into the most widely read consumer magazine for children throughout the world. Prior to National Geographic, he worked for CNN International and Business Traveler International.

Since returning from the yearlong trip around the world with his family in 2009, Jenss has dedicated himself to be an advocate for family travel as an essential part of every child's education. By creating the Family Travel Association, Jenss aimed to establish a collective and unified industry voice that will help change the way families travel – charting a path for the future generations of travelers the industry needs to cultivate.

Having traveled to over 70 countries and counting, Rainer is an authority on the subject of family travel and how it can be used as a learning tool. During his family's around-the-world journey, Rainer reported for National Geographic Traveler's award-winning Intelligent Travel Blog, recognized as one of the Top 25 Family Travel Blogs by Babble.com in 2011 and 2012. In 2011, Rainer founded Smart Family Travel, a strategic marketing consultancy helping organizations target traveling families. In 2012, he joined forces with Scholastic to direct a new family travel initiative and content development for the "Smart Family Travel" feature in Parent & Child magazine.



**Rainer Jenss**  
*Family Travel Association*



**Cheri Amos-Helmicki**  
*Owner*  
Bar Lazy J Ranch

## ***Tack Management & Best Practices for Getting Horses Trail Ride Ready***

Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup> ~ 8:30 AM

Cheri Amos-Helmicki and her husband, Jerry, have owned the Bar Lazy J Guest Ranch in Parshall, Colorado for 25 years and counting. Owning the ranch combines everything they enjoy most: people, outdoor activities and horses! Cheri has been involved with horses for her entire life, with the Dude Ranch Foundation Horse Safety Program since its inception in 2003, a CPR/First Aid instructor since 1975, a Back-Country Safety instructor since 1987, and so much more. Cheri is a past Dude Ranchers' Association president, current CDGRA president, and sat on the DRA board for 12 years. She is also part author of the new DRA Horse Safety Program textbook released in 2020 and is considered an expert and wealth of knowledge by the DRA and other industry leaders.

## ***Social Media 101***

Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup> ~ 10:30 AM

Peter Ross is the co-founder of 829 Studios, a mid-sized marketing firm based in Boston that specializes in the luxury travel industry. He leads a team of 43 designers, programmers, and marketing professionals who consult for a number of tour operators and travel agencies (e.g. Micato Safaris, Off the Beaten Path, Ciao Bambino). Last year, his team was awarded two Adrian Awards by the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International for their work on OceanEdge.com and Oars.com. Peter serves on the Board of Advisors for the Family Travel Association, America Outdoors Association, and TedXKenmore Square. He is an active member of the Adventure Travel Trade Association and frequently addresses the travel industry at events like Virtuoso Forum US & Canada. Other notable clients include Stanford University, Oxfam, Black & Decker, and BitSight.



**Peter Ross**  
*Co-Founder*  
829 Studios

*Dude Ranch Employment Panel Discussion*

Thursday, January 14th ~ 1:15 PM



**Dave Leishman**  
*Owner*  
Bar W Guest Ranch



**Leah Miller**  
*Owner*  
Paradise Guest



**RC Townsend**  
*General Manager*  
Mountain Sky  
Guest Ranch



**Mary Eaton**  
*General Manager*  
Eatons' Ranch



**Tony Warnock**  
*GM/CEO*  
Lost Valley Ranch

*For 95 years now the Dude Ranchers' Association  
has been promoting & supporting the dude ranch industry.  
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