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## ***MEMBER PROFILE - FEBRUARY 2005***

# **Vicki Porter**

When Vicki Porter joined WBO, she had no idea that this fortuitous decision would turn her in a somewhat different direction professionally. Vicki, who once owned a travel agency, opted to become an independent contractor with another agency during the first Gulf War. For a while, she happily worked out of her home but became disenchanted with the travel business when her industry underwent many changes. After a family cruise in Alaska, Vicki realized how much she missed her business and decided to develop an association with an agency. It was during this time that Vicki attended one of our WBO events. She liked our organization so much that she became a member after the Gala in October. Fortuitously, Vicki met Wendy Epstein, owner of All Ways Travel; the rest, as they say, is history.

Vicki is now an independent contractor working in Wendy's office under her own company name, Magellan Travel, Inc. Vicki and Wendy do business under the auspices of both companies. Vicki, who previously specialized in commercial and business travel, now offers air/land, and air/cruise packages for vacation travel. This includes clients planning honeymoons, anniversaries, cruises, family trips to Disney World or out west to ski, etc. Vicki goes to people, rather than having them come to her. She'll meet with them at their home or office, at Wendy's office, All Ways Travel, or at a nearby Starbucks.

Vicki loves planning vacations for her clients, both individuals and families. She does general vacations, destination weddings, honeymoon packages, all kinds of cruises worldwide, family reunions on cruises or at Caribbean resorts, group travel and escorted tours. Because she is associated with a national agency providing Internet specials, she can often get extremely good deals for clients. She is willing to coordinate with groups, even arranging everyone's flights and hotel accommodations as a package.

Vicki has been in the travel business about 26 years. "I started when tickets were being handwritten," she says. She particularly enjoys helping people arrange family trips. Where does she like to go? She enjoys ocean beaches and mountains. She has been to China, Russia, all over Europe, the Caribbean and Tahiti. When her son graduated from Walt Whitman High School and Vicki and her husband celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary, she planned a family Alaskan cruise, which everyone enjoyed tremendously.

A WBO member since October, Vicki credits WBO for enabling her to get back in travel. She likes the speakers at our programs and enjoys our group of "very knowledgeable women who have offered great tips to help my business grow." A Bethesda resident since she was three years old, Vicki is a graduate of Whitman High School and the University of Maryland. When she is not working or traveling with her family, she enjoys relaxing at her family's home in Virginia Beach, watching movies, doing church-related volunteer work, serving as co-president of Suburban Maryland Business & Professional Women, and spending time with her family, friends, and her Golden Retriever, Zeus.