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News from Georgia Tourism:

- **The 2011 Georgia Travel Guide can now be viewed online-** go to exploregeorgia.org or click www.zinio.com/express3?issue=416152361&o=ext&rf=ga_travel11 to see this neat new feature. This will allow extra exposure for advertisers and if you click the web address in the ads it links you directly to that advertiser's specific website.
- **73 counties in Georgia were designated "Camera Ready" by Governor Deal on March 21, 2011 in the South Wing of the State Capitol.** The counties in the Classic South that were designated included: Columbia, Hancock, Jenkins, Lincoln, McDuffie, Richmond, Taliaferro, Warren and Washington Counties. Congratulations to you all!
- **IAGTO – The International Association of Golf Tour Operators show will be held Monterey, CA- May 18 – 21, 2011.** If you would like to co-op and participate in this show the deadline to sign up is April 22nd. Electronic Profile Sheet Fee is \$150 – Your electronic profile sheet will be included in with the GDEcD digital collateral distributed to Golf Tour Operators during appointments. Approximately 30% of the operators who will attend the 3rd IAGTO North America Golf Tourism Convention will be from the USA & Canada with the remainder coming from more than 20 other countries. Please contact Pam Kruseck at pkruseck@georgia.org for more information or to sign up to participate.
- The dates for the **2011 GOMM Days at the Georgia Visitor Centers** are:

April 1 – Valdosta-	Valdosta@georgia.org - 229-559-5828
April 15 – Sylvania	Sylvania@georgia.org - 912-829-0331
May 6 – Savannah	savannah@georgia.org - 912-963-2546
May 7 – Plains	plains@georgia.org - 229-824-7477
May 13 – Kingsland	kingsland@georgia.org - 912-729-3253
May 27 – Lavonia	Lavonia@georgia.org - 706-356-4019
May 27 – Tallapoosa	Tallapoosa@georgia.org - 770-574-2621
June 10 – Columbus	Columbus@georgia.org - 706-649-7455
June 17 – West Point	westpoint@georgia.org - 706-645-3353
June 24 – Ringgold	ringgold@georgia.org - 706-937-4211
July 15 – Augusta	augusta@georgia.org - 706-737-1446
- The **GDEcD will host a Georgia luncheon at the Southern Progress (Southern Living, Cooking Light and Coastal Living) headquarters in Birmingham, Alabama on Wednesday, April 20, 2011 from 11:30am – 1:30pm.** Two people from each region to join us for what is sure to be a memorable event for all involved. We are expecting a total of 150 people from Southern Living, Cooking Light and Coastal Living including the publisher, editors, writers, advertising sales team, designers, production staff and so on. We will transform the HQ3 Pre Function Area into a Road Trip of Genuine Georgia. The writers will make stops all the way at our nine regional tables to say hello and hear about

all of our wonderful offerings. The lunch is an "open house" and will not be a seated lunch. We are working with local caterers (recommended by Southern Living) in Birmingham to create road trip themed foods incorporating Georgia products and/or recipes. Georgia entertainment has been confirmed. The ultimate goal of the luncheon is to share story ideas, but it is also an opportunity to build relationships with each these publications. In order to have a cohesive voice at the event (and in sticking with the road trip theme) - we would like the representatives to be prepared to talk about history, trails, culinary (wine), outdoor adventure and new explorations (ex: unexpected story ideas and unique accommodations) from each of their regions. The Georgia Tourism division will cover the cost of event décor, food, entertainment and other expenses associated with the planning of the event. The regional travel associations will be responsible for their travel and hotel accommodations (if necessary). Georgia Made/Georgia Grown items will be given in a gift bag (provided by the state) We are thrilled to have this opportunity to host this event at the Southern Progress headquarters! I am working closely with the Special Events coordinator at Southern Living and she said everyone is getting excited about our Georgia event. It has been several years since a state has hosted an event there, so this is our opportunity to shine.

- **The Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) announced that Blue Ridge and Ellijay-Gilmer County will host the state's 2011 Georgia Travel Media Marketplace event May 12-14, 2011.** Up to 40 travel writers from the US and Canada will meet with representatives from around the state during the marketplace to get story ideas about Georgia's tourism destinations, attractions and events. The Classic South will have a booth at the marketplace so please contact your CVB/Chamber to make sure your information is included in the community profile sheets that will be distributed to all media that attends the marketplace. Community profile sheets are due to me by March 28th - please email the profile sheets to me at jbuttrum@georgia.org
- **HPD has partnered with the GDEcD and the Fox Theatre Institute to offer a new, one-time grant program for historic theaters.** The purpose of the grant program is to assist local communities in promoting their historic theaters through heritage tourism. Eligible projects include research and documentation; interpretation and public information; advertising and marketing; workshops and training; special events; and signage. "Bricks and mortar" projects are not eligible for this program. The reimbursable grant funds are 50% state/50% local match and will be awarded on a competitive basis. The maximum grant award will be \$2,500; however, there is no minimum amount, and HPD encourages applications for small projects. The application post-mark deadline is April 15, 2011. Grant awards will be announced by June 30, 2011. For more information call Grants Coordinator Carol Moore at 404-463-8434.
- **The Tourism Division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) launched the state's official Civil War website on October 21, 2010 in commemoration of the upcoming Sesquicentennial.** GaCivilWar.org provides an online portal for communities and Civil War organizations in Georgia to promote their Civil War commemoration activities and events on one comprehensive site. **The Civil War online store is one many of the features available on the site.** The online store contains a variety of Georgia Civil War merchandise created for the Sesquicentennial commemoration including a signed copy of Crossroads of Conflict: A Guide to Civil War Sites in Georgia, t-shirts, sweatshirts, belt buckles, ornaments, caps, lapel pins and cufflinks. Many of you have expressed an interest in selling the commemorative merchandise in your welcome centers and gift shops. We are excited to be able offer you the opportunity to purchase the Civil War merchandise at a significantly reduced wholesale price (20 - 30 percent off retail) to sell. To order, simply log on to www.GaCivilWar.org/store and click on the link at the bottom of the page that will redirect you to the wholesale version of the store for dealers. Additional items may be added to the store, so we encourage you to visit the Civil War online store frequently.

- **Fort Bragg & Camp Lejeune Military Base Travel Shows 2011-** Expand your marketing reach and capture more from the military market. Mills Marketing Group is offering these two military shows as an excellent opportunity to encourage travel to your destination for your special events, weekend getaways or for a complete vacation. This is the 19th annual Travel Extravaganza held at Fort Bragg. The military impact on the Fort Bragg service area is in excess of 170,000 people, including retirees who number 40,000. The travel show is a great way to reach this viable market and we'll explain all the opportunities available for their leisure travel. **THINK GROUP BUSINESS TOO!** Camp Lejeune's combined population of base personnel and authorized off-base users is over 150,000 people. For more info contact Jeffrey L. Mills at jeff-mmgs@bellsouth.net or call 678-442-6391.
- **Ga. Tourism Industry Calendar** – For a listing of tourism industry events visit www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Tourism/Pages/IndustryCalendar.aspx
- The U.S. Travel Association provides a toolkit for **National Travel and Tourism Week, which will be May 7-15, 2011.** National Tourism Week is a collective effort to promote the power of travel through customized events in communities nationwide. The goal is to create better awareness of the industry's contribution to the state's economy and to recognize the cultural and social benefits created by travel and tourism. In 2011, the U.S. Travel Rally Day will be hosted on May 10 in cities and towns across America, with convention and visitors bureau leaders uniting with state and local government and business leaders to promote the message that "Travel Matters." For more information go to- www.ustravel.org/marketing/national-travel-and-tourism-week/toolkit

Regional News

- March 3, 2011—**The Best Western in Evans received a “Stars of the Lodging Industry” award for “Outstanding Guest Relations” (Division 1) during the Georgia Hotel & Lodging Association’s event at the Hyatt Regency in Atlanta on March 3, 2011.** Owner/General Manager Kanta (K.R). Kondur received the “Outstanding General Manager” (Division 1) award during this same event. Ms. Kondur will go on to compete in her category during the national “Stars of the Lodging Industry” event, hosted by the American Hotel & Lodging Association, in Atlanta, June 14-15, 2011.
- **Megan Brunson, Room Keeper at the Baymont Inn & Suites/Augusta Riverwatch Parkway received the “Outstanding Room Keeper” Stars award (Division 1) at the Georgia Hotel and Lodging Association’s Event on March 3, 2011,** and will compete nationally during the AH&LA event, June, 2011.
- **Margie Chamberlin, Information Specialist from the Georgia Visitor Center on I-20 in Augusta is retiring on March 31, 2011** after 34 years of dedicated service to the Georgia Department of Economic Development. We wish Margie all the best as she begins this new phase in life!

Mark Your Calendars:

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| March 22, 2011: | Classic South Travel Association Meeting- Savannah Rapids Pavilion- Martinez- Georgia Tourism Sales Staff- Guest Speakers |
| March 23-25, 2011: | Regional Visitor Center Workshop in Albany. |

April 4-10, 2011:	Masters 2011
April 8, 2011:	STS Top 20 Events deadline for events in October, November and December 2011
April 20, 2011:	Southern Progress Visit
May 12-14, 2011:	Travel Media Marketplace (Blue Ridge and Elijay, Georgia
May 7-15, 2011	National Tourism Week
May 24, 2011:	Classic South Travel Association Meeting (GL Smith State Park- Twin City/ Mill Pond Kayak, LLC.
May 27, 2011:	GA On My Mind Day, Tallapoosa VIC
Jun 24, 2011:	GA On My Mind Day, Ringgold VIC
July 8, 2011:	STS Top 20 Events deadline for events in January, February and March 2012
September 12-14, 2011:	Governor's Conference on Tourism- Macon
October 7, 2011:	STS Top 20 Events deadline for events in April, May and June 2012