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**News from Georgia Tourism:**

- Mark your calendars for **Monday, January 23 and Tuesday, January 24, 2012**. We all know what a difference an investment in tourism can do to improve the quality of life for all Georgia residents. It is more important than ever that we build strong advocacy programs in order to showcase the important role of tourism across the state. This annual event will begin with an **“Advocacy 101 Session” on the afternoon of Monday, Jan 23rd** to educate participants on “how to work with your Legislator”. The **“Travel and Tourism Day” industry event at the Capitol will be Tuesday, Jan 24th, and following those activities a “GDEcD Open House” is being planned to give everyone an opportunity to meet the GDEcD staff and visit the department offices.** There are several additional exciting changes in the event format so stay tuned for more information. Also, this year we will be working with Georgia Hospitality & Lodging Association (GHLA), Georgia Restaurant Association (GRA) and Georgia Chamber of Commerce (GCC) to increase the impact and attendance at “travel/tourism” events hosted yearly at the Capital. This will allow for more time to educate the legislators on the importance of the industry. It also makes sense for our organizations to work closer together on events that allow us to educate our constituents and legislators on the impact and issues in our industry. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Tonya Rosado, Executive Director, Kingsland CVB at [tonya@visitkingsland.com](mailto:tonya@visitkingsland.com)
- The **Tourism Product Development Grant Awards will be announced on October 31<sup>st</sup>** - There were a total of 82 applicants this year!
- The Tourism Division of GDEcD has officially switched the Twitter feed over to [www.twitter.com/exploregeorgia](http://www.twitter.com/exploregeorgia). We are excited to have the same name associated with our Facebook and Twitter pages. Everything else will stay the same! [www.twitter.com/georgiatourism](http://www.twitter.com/georgiatourism) no longer exists.
- **The 80 Days of GA Giveaways was a huge success – THANKS to all the partners who participated!** Our goals were exceeded with an increase of Facebook fans by 106% and our twitter followers by 21% resulting in 31,019 contest entries, not to mention all the exposure the partners received in the promotion. Thanks again!
- **Travel Media Marketplace 2012 is scheduled to take place in May.** Bid forms have been sent out and all **bids are due back to GDEcD by December 16<sup>th</sup>**.
- **The Georgia Tourism Division has developed some exciting opportunities to help you reach your audiences to drive visitation and tourism spending in Georgia. The FY12 Grant and Co-Op Programs** were designed to: support both Fall and Spring marketing efforts; provide a diverse mix of opportunities across a variety of media channels and audiences with the best potential for return on investment; and save you

money through significant discounts by leveraging of our collective efforts. Visit [www.marketgeorgia.org](http://www.marketgeorgia.org) - click "Programs and Services" then click "Grants".

- If you are interested in **submitting an event to Southern Living** - Click on the link below- fill out the form to submit your event to their travel directory. They need event information no less than four months in advance in order to consider the event to be listed. [www.southernliving.com/static/generic/travel/events/submission\\_form.html](http://www.southernliving.com/static/generic/travel/events/submission_form.html)
- **Georgia On My Mind (GOMM) merchandise is now available to both tourism partners and consumers for the first time via our new online store on ExploreGeorgia.org.** Go to [ExploreGeorgia.org](http://ExploreGeorgia.org) and click 'Shop for Georgia Items!' on the right rail of the homepage to check out our wearable merchandise including beach towels, bags, blankets, etc. All merchandise is available with an embroidered GOMM logo (black, white, full color and tone-on-tone). No minimum quantities when ordering and a discount is available when ordering quantities of 24 or more. Another option is for Georgia tourism-entities to order co-branded merchandise with their logo featured as well. Click on the "Contact Us" link for more information, or to submit a special request.
- **The new online Brochure Room is a feature of ExploreGeorgia.org that enables consumers to order brochures online.** Consumers can see a listing of available brochures from around the state. Visitors click on the brochure(s) they want and our fulfillment operation will send out the requested brochure(s) along with the State Travel Guide and standard fulfillment packet. At the end of each month, partners who participate will receive an invoice with a listing of the individuals to whom their materials were sent. Go to [www.marketgeorgia.org](http://www.marketgeorgia.org) (click "Programs and Services" then click "Brochure Room") for more info on how to participate in the Online Brochure Room.
- **Economic Impact Update:** The most current 2010 county-by-county data from the U.S. Travel Association is now available on [www.marketgeorgia.org](http://www.marketgeorgia.org). Please note the information available on [www.marketgeorgia.org](http://www.marketgeorgia.org) has been updated since a hard copy of the excel sheet was distributed at the Governor's Tourism Conference in Macon. The Bureau of Economic Analysis released new data after our initial county level data was calculated, this updated information reflected changes in several areas that are used to derive the county level expenditures, including but limited to employment and payroll. The state-wide figures all remain the same with an increase of 7.9 percent in tourism expenditures (over 2009). There has been a redistribution of the expenditures and impacts, so some counties may notice an increase in the earlier reported data, while other areas may notice a decrease in these initial figures.
- **GDEcD will be participating in the Rejuvenate Marketplace Nov. 7- 9, 2011 in San Jose, CA.** Rejuvenate Marketplace is an educational conference designed specifically for meeting planners who organize meetings and conferences for faith-based organizations. The three-day event includes a reverse trade show with one-on-one appointments between planners and suppliers; an all-day planner boot camp for novices and professional planners; several general sessions and two days of sessions covering basic planning topics, business skills and strategy, technology tools and social media, and program innovations. Pam Kruseck will be attending and Co-op info tba.
- **Pam Kruseck will be attending AAA Carolinas Superbowl of Knowledge November 18 - 19, 2011 in Greensboro, NC.** 'Superbowl of Knowledge' is an annual gathering of AAA Carolinas Travel Counselors and staff to learn about new offers and tourism products for their members. AAA Carolinas is expecting 300 employees including Travel Counselors and Drive Vacation Specialists. A lunchtime tradeshow allows Travel Counselors an opportunity to meet with us and gather information.

- **GDEcD will once again be participating as sponsors for the National Tour Association (NTA) Annual Convention from December 5 - 9, 2011 and the American Bus Association (ABA) Annual Marketplace from January 6 - 10, 2012.** As part of our sponsorships we will have a booth on the marketplace floor which allows maximum exposure to all attendees and provides a better opportunity to sell Georgia. We are changing our level of participation this year for ABA and will be the show bag sponsor - we will offer co-sponsorship to our partners. Co-op information will be available soon.
- Make your plans to participate in the **“2011 Georgia for the Holidays” promotion at the Georgia Visitor Information Center – Lavonia/I-85 South** This is a great time to showcase attractions, holiday events, hotels, restaurants and discounts for shopping in your area! PICK YOUR DAY!!! During November and December. Contact Pat Pierson at (706)356-4019 or email [ppierson@georgia.org](mailto:ppierson@georgia.org)
- **Hotel/ Motel Tax Questions?** Jonathan Sharpe (DCA) oversees Hotel Motel Tax collections. He is assisted by James Stevens, DCA's Hotel Motel Tax expert. For questions about Hotel/Motel tax contact: Jonathan Sharpe- 404-679-4996- email [jonathan.sharpe@dca.ga.gov](mailto:jonathan.sharpe@dca.ga.gov) or James Stevens- 404-679-0591 email: [james.stevens@dca.ga.gov](mailto:james.stevens@dca.ga.gov)
- **ExploreGeorgia updates:** Please remember to add New Hotels, New Attractions and Special Offers to the website as well as all your 2012 special events. A logo or photo must be included with all listings. The more information you provide in your listing, the more likely you will be featured in one of our many newsletters.
- **To sign-up for the monthly “Peachbyte” newsletter** which gives you all the latest Georgia Tourism News please email [peachbyte@georgia.org](mailto:peachbyte@georgia.org)
- **Ga. Tourism Industry Calendar** – For a listing of tourism industry events visit [www.georgia.org/GeorgialIndustries/Tourism/Pages/IndustryCalendar.aspx](http://www.georgia.org/GeorgialIndustries/Tourism/Pages/IndustryCalendar.aspx)
- **Not Camera Ready?** Learn how to become Camera Ready at: <http://www.georgia.org/GeorgialIndustries/Entertainment/FilmTV/cameraready/Pages/default.aspx>

### ***Regional News***

**Congratulations to Katrina Hollmann from the Augusta CVB on her recent marriage to David Selby!**

**Evans Towne Center Park officially opened on October 22<sup>nd</sup> in Evans. Go to [www.columbiacountyga.gov](http://www.columbiacountyga.gov) to see what this beautiful new park has to offer!**

**The AAA Five Diamond Ritz-Carlton Lodge, Reynolds Plantation** is a top-choice holiday destination for locals and discerning travelers who want to experience Southern charm and warmth. The spirit of the season is captured in the wide array of activities, amenities and events offered at this luxury resort overlooking scenic Lake Oconee. **The Lodge's first ice skating rink will be open from November 23, 2011 to February 15, 2012. To book a holiday stay, please call 800-826-1945.**

**The Clarks Hill Partnership will be hosting another media tour on November 2-5, 2011. Travel Writers will visit Columbia, Lincoln, McDuffie, Warren and Wilkes Counties as part of the media fam trip.**

**Mark Your Calendars:**

- November 2-5, 2011:** Clarks Hill Partnership Media Tour
- November 15, 2011:** Classic South Travel Association Meeting- Augusta- Meadow Garden- Augusta 10:00am- noon
- January 6 2012:** STS Top 20 Events deadline for July, August, September 2012
- January 24, 2012:** Travel and Tourism Day at the Capitol – Atlanta
- January 30- February 2, 2012:** Classic South Fam Tour- Georgia Visitor Center's
- April 6, 2012:** STS Top 20 Events deadline for events in October/November/December 2012
- August 26-29 2012:** The 2012 Governor's Conference on Tourism- Atlanta Marriott Buckhead Hotel & Conference Center