

Monthly Update – September 2009
The Georgia Coast Travel Region

BREAKING NEWS

- If you missed hearing **Peter Yesawich** speak at the 2009 Governor's Conference on Tourism...here's your chance to get insight on the state of tourism, present and future, from one of the industry's leading experts.

Speaker Peter Yesawich, Chairman &CEO, Ypartnership, LLC will present "Emerging Lifestyles and Travel Trends: Implications and Leisure Travel Marketing for Savannah in the Year Ahead"

Date: Wednesday, October 14th, 8am - registration and networking begin;

Time: 8:30 – 10 a.m. breakfast and keynote speaker

Location: Hilton Savannah DeSoto, 15 E. Liberty Street

Cost: \$30

Contact: Advance reservations required. Contact the TLC office at 912.232.1223 or tlc@tourismleadershipcouncil.com. **Reservations are due no later than Friday, October 9th.**

- **REMINDER:** Please note that you may get a call from someone asking to verify information for the 2010 Georgia Travel Guide. They are working for the company who publishes the guide and are making sure all your info is correct. Please let your front desk staff know about these calls as well. **PLEASE DO NOT** hang up on them. If you have questions please call me.

Kudos

- **Georgia Magazine has awarded Tybee Island** the following -
 - Reader's Choice Best Beach
 - Best Seafood Restaurant- The Crab Shack
 - Runner-Up Best Annual Event- Pirate Fest
 - Runner-Up Best Small Town
 - Runner-Up Best Weekend Getaway
- **Georgia's Visitor Information Centers Win International Marketing Award**
Recognized with Mercury Award for Tourism Partnership Promotion Program
The Georgia Department of Economic Development's (GDEcD) Visitor Information Centers (VICs) were honored with an international marketing award for their tourism partnership promotion program. The National Council of State Tourism Directors (NCSTD) announced the winners of the 2009 Mercury Awards program Sept. 1 at the Travel Industry Association's annual Educational Seminar for Tourism Organizations (ESTO). The Mercury Award honors the best in state tourism office marketing and promotion programs each year.
- **Cumberland Island To Be Featured on New Quarters**
'America the Beautiful' program to honor national parks, historic sites
Governor Sonny Perdue has announced that Cumberland Island will be honored in the new United States Mint America the Beautiful Quarters program.
- **Savannah makes Priceline's Top 50** - For the second holiday in a row, Savannah has made Priceline.com's (NASDAQ: PCLN) annual list of the 50 most popular destinations. The Hostess City was the 39th most popular destination for the Fourth of July holiday and now stands at No. 34 for the Labor Day holiday.

- **National Geographic Traveler** has scoured the globe for the world's most beautiful, interesting, and off-beat road trips and Savannah has been included! Few regions in the United States pack in as much history, culture, and natural beauty as the Low Country—a 200-mile stretch of coastal South Carolina and Georgia.
<http://traveler.nationalgeographic.com/drives/low-country.html>

GDEcD Press Releases

- Check out <http://www.georgia.org/PressCenter/Press+Release+Archive.htm> for all of the **tourism related press releases** that have been sent out over the past months.

Coast Mentions in the Media

- Oct 2009 - WSB-TV's website - Budget Travelers Find Adventure In Georgia – **Savannah, Jekyll Island and Fargo mentioned.**
<http://www.wsbtv.com/travelgetaways/18329720/detail.html>
- September 2009 - Tifton Gazette By Christine Tibbetts - **A bullish experience: Savannah's parks and squares**
<http://www.google.com/url?sa=X&q=http://www.tiftongazette.com/entertainment/local_story_270221556.html&ct=ga&cd=wgQEJ6xhDKo&usg=AFQjCNFq7l-n_5kbLSn_vaEV0fLGrPsiXw>
- September 2009 - Tifton Gazette By Christine Tibbetts - **Darien: There's more beyond the first glance -**
http://www.tiftongazette.com/entertainment/local_story_251074329.html
- September 2009 – ajc - **Southeastern Travel: Decrease Increase Haunted hotels: Five, if you dare – Kehoe House and Olde Pink House Savannah -**
<http://www.ajc.com/travel/southeast/haunted-hotels-five-if-145969.html>
- September 2009 – ajc - Ghost tours of the Southeast - **Sixth Sense Savannah mentioned.**
<http://www.ajc.com/travel/southeast/ghost-tours-of-the-145987.html>
- The video for Miley Cyrus's new song was filmed on the Coast. Mostly in **Savannah and on Tybee Island.** When I Look At You
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=anBRO5C2WBY&eurl=http%3A%2F%2Fperezhillton%2Ecom%2F&feature=player_embedded#t=17
- August, 2009 – Georgia Magazine - **Georgia's wild-caught shrimp – Darien, Lady Jane, Holton's Seafood mentioned -**
<http://www.georgiamagazine.com/currentissue.asp?menu=22&ID=2224&mon=August>
- August, 2009 – The Washington Post - **The Long Weekend: Exploring Cumberland Island, Ga. -** http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/24/AR2009082402312_pf.html
- GA Magazine June 2009 - **Genuine gems – Okefenokee Swamp and Cumberland Island mentioned -**
http://georgiamagazine.com/archives_view.asp?mon=6&yr=2009&ID=2183

Media Opportunities and Other Interesting Stuff

- **Don't miss your opportunity to nominate your event for the STS Top 20 Events**
<http://www.southeasttourism.org/top20/>
- **Coastal Regional Commission** is proud to present the September issue of our monthly newsletter, The Coastal Connector. The issue can be accessed online at the following link <http://crc.ga.gov/Pages/news.aspx>

- **People spending more time on social sites - Nielsen report follows company's decision to team up with Facebook - Associated Press**
Americans have been devoting 17 percent of all their Internet time to social networks like Facebook and blogging Web sites like Blogger. The percentage for last month is up from 6 percent a year earlier. The report comes from Nielsen and follows its decision to team up with Facebook on a marketing program that helps advertisers measure how well their ads work on the online hangout. Nielsen estimates that ad spending on leading social-network and blogging sites more than doubled year-over-year, to about \$108 million for the month. This happened even as several industries decreased their overall ad spending.
- **U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION SWINE-FLU TOOLKIT** - The U.S. Travel Association has created a list of links to help you respond to the H1N1 situation. For more information, [click here](#).
- **U.S. SENATE PASSES TRAVEL PROMOTION ACT** - Recently, the U.S. Senate approved the **Travel Promotion Act** (TPA) on a vote of 79-19. Under TPA a public-private partnership would be created to promote the United States as a travel destination and to better detail U.S. security and entry policies. For more information, [click here](#).
- **TRAVEL NEWS: BUSINESS TRAVEL CAN HELP BOTTOM LINE-US STUDY SAYS** - Business travel -- often the target for cutbacks by companies seeking to reduce expenses -- actually boosts profits and could help the U.S. economy come back from the recession, a report found Tuesday. Research released by the global research firm Oxford Economics estimated that for every dollar invested in business travel, companies can expect an average \$12.50 in increased revenue and \$3.80 in new profits. For the complete Forbes.com article, [click here](#).
- **Online ad spending to grow to 15% - 2010 to see increase from 13%**
<http://www.variety.com/article/VR1118008942.html?categoryId=1009&cs=1>
- **Atlanta will be hosting Travel South Showcase 2011**
<http://www.travelsouthusa.org/showcase11/showcase2011pressrelease.pdf>
- Just a reminder to **submit events to Southern Distinction's monthly calendar** - email event information to calendar@southerndistinction.com.
- **Birdwatching stays steady as an American hobby - USA Today** - One in every five Americans watches birds, according to a new report from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service called "Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis." The report claims that 48 million people birdwatch, remaining at a steady 20% of the U.S. population since 1996. And while 88% of birders do their birdwatching from their backyards, 42% travel to indulge in their hobby. For more info on this lucrative market visit: http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2009-08-05-birdwatching-report_N.htm

FAMs and Press Trips

- **Christine Tibbetts** was on the Coast in July. She stayed in Darien and St. Marys and had nothing but praise for the areas and the professionals she stayed with at the Spencer House and the Blue Heron. Way to go guys! Christine's articles will appear in the Tifton Gazette shortly as well as possibly appearing in several other papers that Christine does freelance work for. UPDATE – Christine has already published both pieces. Please see in the Coast Mentions in the Media Section.
- **Christine** was also in Savannah August 17 and 18 on a press trip that she set up on her own. UPDATE – Christine has already published this piece. Please see in the Coast Mentions in the Media Section.
- Savannah and GDEcD will be hosting a group of 9 travel agents from **Virgin Holiday UK** on Oct 2nd and 3rd.

- **Wolfgang Streitborger**, GDEcD's dedicated tourism rep from Germany, will be on the Coast Oct 6th through 9th.
- **John Nash** will be on the Coast – Oct 11-14 – *The Three Entrances of the Okefenokee Swamp*. John is a freelance writer for several publications.
- **Clive Nicholls** from the Choice Magazine UK will be on the Coast October 15 and 16.
- A writer from **The Lady Magazine UK** will be in Savannah October 19th and 20th.

Grants

- **GDEcD now has a website devoted to its grant programs.** Please visit the following link for all grant info:
<http://web.georgia.org/net/content/page.aspx?s=115682.72586.26.3011>
- **National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs grants**
The National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs funds public projects at museums, libraries, historic sites, and other historical and cultural organizations. The grants support historic site interpretation, exhibits, reading or film discussion series, symposia, and digital projects. For more information contact the Division of Public Programs, 202-606-8269 or www.neh.gov. Application deadline for funds from America's Historical and Cultural Organizations and Interpreting America's Historic Places programs is January 13, 2010.
- **NHPRC Publishing Historical Records Grants for post-1820 documents**
Awards of up to \$250,000 annually for proposals to publish historical records of national significance. Documents should fall predominantly after 1820.
www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement/publishing.html
Due by October 5.
- **NHPRC Strategies and Tools Grant**
Awards of up to \$150,000 for nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, government agencies, or recognized Native American groups for developing new strategies and tools that can improve the preservation, public discovery, or use of historical records. Projects may also focus on techniques and tools that will improve the professional performance and effectiveness of those who work with such records, such as archivists, documentary editors, and records managers.
www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement/strategies.html
Due by October 5.

International Tourism News

- Below is a link to a great article on "greycationers." -
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-1211695/Baby-boom-travellers-dubbed-Greycationers-helping-British-tourism-boom.html>

From The State

- **All presentations from the 2009 Governor's Conference on Tourism** are now on-line. Check out the Marketing 2010 presentation for info on upcoming changes to exploregeorgia.org as well as info on analytics from 2009: <http://www.georgiagtcc.com/>
- GDEcD RESEARCH UPDATE
 - **ROI OF BUSINESS TRAVEL REPORT**
Released on September 15, 2009, new research conducted by leading global research firm Oxford Economics establishes the first clear link between business travel and business growth. For every dollar invested in business travel, businesses experience an average \$12.50 in increased revenue and \$3.80 in new profits, according to the study. It is the first time that the return on investment of business travel has been successfully measured. For the complete study, [click here](#).

- **TRAVEL NEWS: HOTEL OCCUPANCY FORECAST** - Hotel occupancy will likely gain strength in late 2009 and 2010, but profit will remain elusive as hotels continue to use heavily discounted rates to draw in more travelers, according to a revised U.S. lodging forecast from PricewaterhouseCoopers. The revision shows revenue down 16.1 percent in 2009 and flat revenue in 2010, compared with the company's June forecast of a revenue decrease of 15.7 percent in 2009 and a slight increase in 2010 revenue of 1.6 percent. While the occupancy forecast for 2009 is slightly stronger than the company predicted in June, it comes at the expense of room rates. Occupancy is expected to come in at 55.5 percent in 2009, up from the June forecast of 55.1 percent. 2010 occupancy is forecasted at 56.1 percent. For the complete Wall Street Journal article, [click here](#).
- **All online brochure room activity will be handled by Peggy Smith beginning immediately.** Please contact Peggy if you have any concerns.
 Peggy Smith
 Tourism Division
 75 Fifth Street, Suite 1200
 Atlanta, GA 30308
 404-962-4147
psmith@georgia.org
- **The Georgia Mobile Travel Guide is live!**
 On your PC:
<http://cityguides2go.mobi/georgia>
 On your mobile phone:
<http://www.exploregeorgia.org>
- Due to the state economic crisis, the June 2009 issue of **Reflections** has gone green! Reflections is the quarterly publication of the Georgia African American Historic Preservation Network.
http://hpd.dnr.state.ga.us/Assets/Documents/Reflections_June_2009.pdf
- We have received many questions regarding the **Tourism Foundation** since Gilda Watters retirement at the end of July. The Foundation's core mission is to raise funds from the private sector in order to maximize the growth of the tourism industry statewide. The Foundation will be reviewing a plan for fund raising at its September meeting; however, it is likely that they will delay executing any fund raising initiatives until the economic climate improves. This also means that the Foundation may not require staffing any earlier than the end of the calendar year. We will update you as the Board moves forward with its plans.
- **Check out the Special Offers tab on exploregeorgia.org** If you don't have a special offer listed...Why Not?? In addition to typical special offers you will notice Packages on this page. Please submit any packages that you would like to have included in this section to me. I will submit on a weekly basis to our programmers in Atlanta. They must be true packages and not just special rates for one hotel or attraction. When you submit to me please put it in a format that is easy to understand-
 Location Name...Location City...Package Name...Package Dates...Package inclusions...Package Cost, etc.
 Remember – Special Offers can be for a single hotel or attraction, Packages must be for multiple...a hotel with attractions or meals. We welcome both...both are free to list on exploregeorgia.org. If you would like more information please feel free to contact me.
- **GDEcD is sponsoring the Great GPS Giveaway sweepstakes.** Every month through October 2009, visitors and residents alike are invited to submit their Georgia vacation photos on www.ExploreGeorgia.org. All submitted photos will also be considered for use in state publications and collateral materials, including the state's official 2010 Travel Guide. The submitted photos may be featured on ExploreGeorgia.org, and a new winner will take home the grand prize each month: a brand-new Garmin GPS. Contestants can upload as many photographs as they wish: the more times they enter, the greater their chances of winning. Visit www.ExploreGeorgia.org for full contest rules and entry forms.

- **GA Tourism is on Facebook** - The latest trip ideas, special offers, events and travel news can be found on the **Explore Georgia** Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Explore-Georgia/36470358490>) – we encourage everyone to become a fan of the page and check it out, as it is updated regularly.
- **Please visit the newly redesigned research section of www.marketgeorgia.org.** It is user friendly and offers easy access to the multitude of research reports available. You can also find the latest research newsletter that offers a plethora of national and local tourism data.
- **GDEcD's MONTHLY REPORTS**
You can now find monthly reports from GDEcD's international representatives in the UK and Germany on www.MarketGeorgia.org in the monthly regional reports section.
- **Peach Byte!** – GDEcD's official Georgia Tourism Monthly E-Newsletter available to everyone. If you have not yet signed up to receive Peach Byte, please send an email to peachbyte@georgia.org requesting that your e-mail address be added. If you would like to see past editions of Peach Byte, visit: <http://www.georgia.org/GeorgialIndustries/Tourism/Pages/NewsEvents.aspx>
- **Market Georgia Tourism is an excellent resource for tourism professionals.** You will find industry research, industry presentations, grant information, excellent contact information and more...information is added weekly: <http://www.georgia.org/GeorgialIndustries/Tourism/Pages/default.aspx>
- **GDEcD SALES TEAM UPDATE**

GROUP SALES:

Katie Baasen attended the **South Carolina Motorcoach Operators Association** Annual Meeting and Marketplace August 24-27 at the Gwinnett Place Marriott. Katie participated in networking activities, marketplace appointments as well as conducting the Group Tour 101 seminar during the conference.

Katie Baasen attended **La Cumbre** with the Atlanta CVB from September 9-11. Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2009, La Cumbre featured 450 buyers and 250 exhibitors in the following categories: Leisure, Corporate and MICE in the Latin American market. GDEcD participated with Jesus Garcia of the ACVB.

Katie Baasen and **Kevin Langston** will be representing GDEcD as part of the Travel South delegation attending **Discover American Day** in Toronto sponsored by the Visit USA Committee. Travel South will host a luncheon showcasing the southern states and their appeal to the Canadian traveler. GDEcD will participate in scheduled appointments with media representatives, travel agents and tour operators during a marketplace session. Discover America Day - Canada is the only marketplace held in Canada that focuses purely on inbound tourism to the USA.

The Georgia Tourism division will again be participating as sponsors of the **National Tour Association (NTA)** Annual Marketplace and the **American Bus Association (ABA)** Annual Marketplace. This sponsorship provides us with a booth on the marketplace floor where we will maximize our exposure in this market. Georgia's theme for this year's marketplace is *Civil War-Sesquicentennial Commemoration*. We will distribute Georgia items, Sesquicentennial and Civil War itineraries, and giveaways commemorating Georgia's role in the war at the booth. Please contact Katie Baasen via email for more information or to participate, kbaasen@georgia.org. Co-ops are available for state partners:

Kudzu Sponsorship - NTA: \$500 and ABA: \$350
Peach Sponsorship - NTA: \$750 and ABA: \$650

GDEcD has launched an e-newsletter targeted towards tour operators. "**FYI from the Peach State**" will be sent quarterly to tour operators around the country. If you have any

updates or special offers for the tour market and would like to have the information included in the e-newsletter, please contact Katie Baasen at kbaasen@georgia.org. The next newsletter is scheduled to go out in October.

Gas Card Sponsorship - GDEcD is once again asking each Travel Association to participate in our Tour Operator giveaway program to take place at several of the Motorcoach Association Annual Meetings. We completed this program last year at the GA, AL, SC, NC, VA, MD, FL, and South Central Motorcoach Associations Annual Meetings with much success. The key message is "Your business is good business for Georgia". Please contact Katie Baasen at kbaasen@georgia.org for more information.

CONSUMER SALES:

Southern Women's Show - Orlando, FL - October 8 - 11, 2009

The Southern Women's Show attracts more than 12,000 women over a 3-day period. These consumer shows target women with give-a-ways and tips on beauty, cooking, fashion, health & well-being, shopping, travel and much more! Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.

Georgia National Fair - Perry, GA - October 8 - 18, 2009

The annual, state-sponsored Georgia National Fair is Georgia's celebration of its youth, agriculture, and heritage. The Fair has been designated as a 'Top 50 Fair in North America' by Amusement Business magazine. Fairgoers will be treated to one of the state's best family-oriented, entertainment values showcasing education and fun. Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.

Southeast ASTA Tradeshow - Atlanta, GA - October 15, 2009

Last year more than 180 Travel Professionals participated in the Southeast ASTA Tradeshow in order to learn more about what destinations have to offer. Clients still want to take vacations but they may need to cut them shorter or explore closer to home. This is an opportunity to let Travel Agents and other Professionals in Georgia know what is in their own backyard! Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.

AARP Life@50+ Expo - Las Vegas, NV - October 22 -24, 2009

They are expecting more than 25,000 members and others from all over the United States and abroad to attend the event. The AARP Vegas@50+ event is a great opportunity to collaborate with AARP and to reach the 50+ audience. It is an opportunity to increase Georgia's visibility among baby boomers; a demographic comprising 26 percent of the U.S. population and a driving force in the market place. Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.

AAA Carolinas - Charlotte, NC - November 21, 2009

AAA Superbowl of Knowledge is an annual gathering of AAA Carolinas Travel Counselors and staff to learn what new offers are available as well as new things to sell to their members. A lunchtime tradeshow allows Travel Counselors an opportunity to meet with the travel industry and gather information to take back to their offices and pass on to their membership. Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.

Dates to Remember

- **October 9 - STS Top 20 Events Nomination Deadline** for April, May & June 2010. For nomination forms and more info, go to http://southeasttourism.org/top_20_events.html .
- **October 16, 2009 – Georgia Coast Travel Association Meeting** – Preferred Outlets of Darien – 10:30am
- **January 8, 2010 - STS Top 20 Events Nomination Deadline** for July, August, & September 2010. For nomination forms and more info, go to http://southeasttourism.org/top_20_events.html .

- **Save the date!** Tourism Day at the Capitol is **January 26, 2010**.
- **April 9, 2010 - STS Top 20 Events Nomination Deadline** for October, November, & December. For nomination forms and more info, go to http://southeasttourism.org/top_20_events.html .
- **July 16, 2010 - STS Top 20 Events Nomination Deadline** for January, February & March 2011. For nomination forms and more info, go to http://southeasttourism.org/top_20_events.html .

Regional Contact Information

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