



Monthly Update – Dec 2008 – Jan 2009 **The Georgia Coast Travel Region**

Kudos

- **Savannah was ranked a Best Southern City by Southern Living Readers** in the January, 2009 issue of Southern Living Magazine's 13th annual Readers' Choice Awards. Paula Deen's restaurant The Lady & Sons was No. 1 in the Southern Favorite Restaurants category with Mrs. Wilkes' Dining Room not far behind in the sixth spot.
<http://www.southernliving.com/travel/2009-readers-choice-awards-00400000036477/>
- **The Cloister at Sea Island is included on Travel + Leisure's Top 500 World's Best Hotels list** in the January 2009 issue! The Cloister was also ranked No.1 in Georgia.
<http://www.travelandleisure.com/tl500/2009/region/us>
- **The Savannah Music Festival has been named one of the "Best Events Around the World in 2009" but the London Times!**
<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/travel/news/article5389520.ece>
- **Savannah has been named as one of "The 50 Best Romantic Getaways"** in the February issue of Travel +Leisure.
- After three years of working with Georgia's preservation community to make the preservation license plate a reality, Historic Preservation Division is extremely pleased to announce that **the first Georgia Heritage Grant funded with proceeds from tag sales has been awarded to the Friends of the Tybee Theater**. The matching grant of \$20,000 will be used for window and door repairs to the historic Tybee Theater on Tybee Island in Chatham County.
- **The Okefenokee Swamp Park has been named to the American Camellia Trail** by the American Camellia Society. The Okefenokee Swamp Park is one of only 41 sites in America. For more information on the American Camellia Society visit their website at www.americancamellias.org

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 few months.

Coast Mentions in the Media

- **Sept/Oct - AAA Going Places - A Festival of Fun: Indulge the senses during Savannah's fall lineup of stellar events** - The circulation of AAA Going Places is 2,547,092 -
http://www.aaasouth.com/previous_issues/sep_oct_08/feat_AAAscapes_so08.asp
- **Sept/Oct - AAA Going Places - Georgia Gems: Exploring the Riches of the South**
The circulation of AAA Going Places is 2,547,092 -
http://www.aaasouth.com/previous_issues/sep_oct_08/feat_georgia_so08.asp
- **Nov – Sky Travel - Five Short Savannah Stories –**
http://travel.sky.com/inspiration/travellersWorld/1228393500359_568
These pieces are from UK Travel Writer, Ferne Arfin's visit to the Coast in spring 2008.
- **Dec – Sunday Telegraph - The Revamp of Old Savannah -**
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/artsandculture/3795949/Georgia-USA-The-revamp-of-old-Savannah.html>
This piece is from UK Travel Writer, Ferne Arfin's visit to the Coast in spring 2008.

- **Dec - Georgia Magazine - Southern Literary Trail -**
http://georgiamagazine.com/archives_view.asp?mon=12&yr=2008&ID=2054
- **Dec - Ladue News in St. Louis, Missouri - Savannah Siren of the South.** The Presidents' Quarters Inn and Savannah are highlighted.
http://www.laduenews.com/art/travel/1121_travel.pdf
- **Dec – InnCuisine.com – The Blue Heron Inn featured -**
<http://inncuisine.com/decadent-desserts/wednesday-inninsider-sunrise-and-comfort-at-the-blue-heron-inn-recipes-southern-spicy-gingerbread-cake-so-light-buttermilk-pancakes/#more-1931>
- **Jan/Feb - Songlines (London) – Savannah Music Festival -**
<http://www.songlines.co.uk/documents/festivals/SavanaFestival.pdf>

Media Opportunities and Other Interesting Stuff

- **Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi have joined together for the first-ever Southern Literary Trail.** For more information visit - www.southernliterarytrail.org
- It's time for entries for the **Flavor of Georgia Food Product Contest 2009!** Please see the following link for online registration and a download for the brochure and paper entry form. www.areg.caes.uga.edu
- **Green Travelers -** A recent AAA Travel Pulse™ survey showed 85 percent of travelers say they are truly dedicated to the environment and nearly half (48%) said they are interested in taking an eco-friendly vacation in the next three years.

One way to be eco-friendly when traveling is to rent a fuel-efficient or hybrid vehicle. In 2008, the Hertz Corp. saw a 40 percent increase in the number of reserved cars from their Green Collection compared to 2007. (AAA)

- **The 5th printing of [Jekyll Island's Treasured Recipes Cooking for Caretta caretta](#) is out.** This cookbook is an all volunteer endeavor and 100% of the profits go to the Georgia Sea Turtle Center! It was selected as one of the Top Ten in 2005 by the largest publisher of cookbooks in the nation! For more information on how to purchase this book please contact Dorothy Lane Carswell, Writer/Editor at dlcarswell@gmail.com. This would be an excellent addition to your gift shops.

FAMs and Press Trips

- **Anne Young** was on the Coast in Dec with several members of her new company Meridian Marketing Services. Anne and her partner Peter Hannaford are the new tourism reps for the state of GA in the UK. Though Anne has been our rep for years now, she recently won the GA contract with her new company.
- **Anita Draycott** was on the Coast in December and early January. Anita has been an editor, writer and photographer for more than 20 years. She is managing editor of GolfStyle magazine, an upscale publication distributed to affluent golfers (50,000) across Canada. www.golfstylemagazine.ca She is also editor of life, etc. (an upscale magazine with a circulation of 300,000 across Canada published for the Royal Bank of Canada). In addition, Anita regularly contributes articles and photography to the following magazines and newspapers: Toronto Star, Zoomer, DreamScapes, MoneySense, Doctor's Review. Anita visited Savannah, Sea Island, St. Simons and Jekyll Islands for a story on golf. She plans to publish her story in GolfStyle magazine in 2009. Anita came to the Coast as a result of her meeting with Kevin Udell from the Jekyll Island Authority at the Toronto Golf Show in 2008 as well as encouragement from the GDEcD trade rep in Canada.
- **Stephen Murphy** was on the Coast in December. Stephen is a UK based travel writer. Stephen did not contact GDEcD to help with his trip arrangements. The tourism folks in Charleston tipped us off the Stephen would be in our area. I made contact with Stephen

and provided him with contact information for the areas that he visited should he need further information. I know that Stephen visited St. Marys, Cumberland Island and Savannah but am not sure of his other stops.

- **Stan and Sandra Posner** were on the Coast in January. The Posners were researching their 5th edition of "Drive I-95: Exit by Exit Info, Maps, History and Trivia", the definitive driving map/guidebook for the I-95 highway from Boston to Miami. (www.drivei95.com). All of their stops on the Coast this year were the results of tourism partners contacting them over the last year and inviting them to stop and stay in their property, eat in their hotel or see their attraction. If you would like to invite them for next year please contact them via sandra@drivei95.com

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>
- **The Southern Arts Federation** with support from the National Endowment for the Arts is pleased to offer a limited number of Economic Response Technical Assistance grants for non-profit presenting organizations in our nine-state region. In response to the current economic climate, this special initiative encourages visual, media, performing, and literary arts presenting organizations to contract with an outside consultant for intensive work to focus on organizational stabilization and to strengthen an organization's infrastructure. Examples of consultation activities funded by this Technical Assistance grant program include: updating a strategic plan, short and long term planning, fundraising, innovation or entrepreneurial efforts, building participation, and grantsmanship. Activities should focus on ways that the organization will respond to the current economic conditions for the long-term health and stability of the organization. For more information, please contact Nikki Estes, Program Director - Presenting & Touring, at 404-874-7244 ext. 16 or nestes@southarts.org.
- **The National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program** invites grant applications from nonprofit groups, academic institutions, and local, regional, state, and tribal governments to support projects that lead directly to the identification, preservation and interpretation of battlefield land and/or historic sites associated with battlefields. More information is available at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/abpp> **Deadline: January 23, 2009.**
- **FFY 2009 HPF Grant Cycle Begins Now** - Application packets for the next cycle of federal grants earmarked for certified local governments interested in completing survey and planning or building/site-specific predevelopment projects are now available on HPD's Website at <http://www.gashpo.org/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=40>. The **postmark deadline is February 1, 2009.**
- **2009 Historic Landscape and Garden Grant Program** - Non-profit organizations and local governments are eligible to apply for a matching grant for the preservation of Georgia's gardens and landscapes. All projects must be completed within a two-year period with a final report submitted to the Committee at the conclusion. Applications may be found on The Garden Club of Georgia's Web site at http://www.uga.edu/gardenclub/pdfs/hlgg_app09.pdf or from Chairman Beverly Taylor at 706/327-8331, bevst@charter.net. The **deadline for submission of the application to the Chairman is February 1, 2009.**
<http://www.uga.edu/gardenclub/>
- **The National Park Service's National Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Program** is offering grants to Indian tribes, Alaska Native villages and corporations, Native Hawaiian organizations, and museums. Two types of grants are available: Consultation/Documentation Grants - Applications **Due: March 2, 2009;** and Repatriation Grants - rolling application. Applications and more information online at <http://www.nps.gov/history/nagpra/grants>

From The State

- The **GDEcD 2008 Annual Report** is available on Georgia.org under the "About Us" section.
- **GDEcD has a new photo contest - January 1st launched this new program on www.ExploreGeorgia.org** The contest is open to U.S. citizens, 18 years or older. Once photos are submitted, GDEcD will have full usage rights of photographs. There will be one winner each month through October 2009 and winners will be chosen by an internal judging panel. Each winner will receive a new GPS system and will be featured in the 2010 Georgia Travel Guide.
- **It's here -- Georgia's Creative Economies website** for marketing and promoting Georgia Made Georgia Grown Products. The website will connect buyers and sellers, corporations and corporate suppliers, locals and visitors to Georgia's creative small businesses. The listing is free to Georgia-based artisans, theaters, crafters, agritourism venues, festival planners and others looking to enhance their marketing and advertising. Public launch is scheduled for Jan 23rd. To register your Georgia Made or Georgia Grown product, go to www.gamadegagrown.org and follow the instructions. Visit www.georgia.org/foundation to learn more about this economic development effort led by the Georgia Tourism Foundation.
- **2007 TRAVEL PROFILE AVAILABLE:** The 2007 Travel Economic Impact reports are now available online. Visit www.marketgeorgia.org for a statewide analysis as well as a regional analysis. You may use this information to help provide information to your board and communities about how tourism impacts your local economy.
- Following several years of working with **The Vacations Group**, a niche high quality tour operator in the UK, Anne Young has been able to secure some additional product on the GA Coast. If you go to www.vacationsgroup.co.uk then click on Carolinas and the South, then Georgia in the drop down menu to the left, you can see which properties they have added. There have been a couple of hotels in Savannah in their brochure for the last few years and now they have expanded their product to include the Brunswick and the Golden Isles area, St. Marys and Cumberland Island.
- Registration is now open for the **Flavor of Georgia Food Product Contest 2009**. Send in your commercially available or market-ready prototype food products for consideration as one of Georgia's finest. Winners in the Contest will be announced by Georgia Governor Sonny Purdue on the Governor's Agricultural Awareness Day on March 17, 2009. Categories this year include barbecue and hot sauces; confections; dairy products; meat products; snack foods; jams, jellies and sauces; and miscellaneous products. Entries will be judged on flavor, Georgia theme, unique or innovative qualities, commercial appeal and originality. An award for each category and a Grand Prize Winner will be presented. Winners also earn the right to use the Flavor of Georgia logo on their products. **Go to www.caed.uga.edu for all the information and application**
- April 20 & 21 the **2009 Techno Tourism Conference** will be held at the Classic Center in Athens. The conference will focus on social networking tools, campaigns and demonstrations showcasing applications on a PC. More information will be available soon.
- **Travel Show Co-op Opportunities** – There are several consumer travel shows with co-op opportunities available with the Georgia Department of Economic Development. Contact Pam Kruseck, Consumer Sales Mgr, at 404.962.4175 or email Pam at pkruseck@georgia.org if you have any questions.
- **DCA has created a new database of historic markers**, by county including an image of the sign. - <http://www.georgiaplanning.com/hm/>
- **DCA's December 2008 newsletter** published by DCA Communications. www.dca.state.ga.us/dcanewsletter/200812.html
DCA's January 2009 newsletter published by DCA Communications.

- **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://my.georgia.org/net/content/go.aspx?s=244185.72586.26.3011>
- **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://my.georgia.org/core/item/page.aspx?s=72456.72586.26.3011>
UPDATE: In April 09, www.marketgeorgia.org will be redirected to www.georgia.org/travel.

Exploregeorgia.org

- **www.ExploreGeorgia.org** – Make sure you are updating your free listing on the State tourism website. If you need assistance with how to register or navigate the partner admin pages, please contact me.
- **We have made the following changes** to exploregeoriga.org
 - 1) Events will have their own page and URL
 - 2) Ability to create sub-events within events
 - 3) New image upload tool (for events and listings)
 - 4) Ability to delete images, add captions (for events and listings)
- **ARES Update:** We have had twenty-two rooms reserved via ARES on www.exploregeorgia.org. Rooms have been booked in several regions including Historic Heartland, Coast, Presidential Pathways, Atlanta Metro and the Northeast Georgia Mountains. Travelers from Michigan, Maine, and Florida have booked rooms since November 2008. More than \$5,000 in reservations has been booked from the U.K. to Texas through ARES since its launch in September.

Georgia Visitor Information Center Marketing Opportunities & News

- **2009 Georgia On My Mind Day** dates for all of the state Visitor Information Centers
March 27th – Columbus
April 3rd – Valdosta
April 16th – Sylvania
May 9th – Plains
May 15th – Kingsland
May 22nd – Lavonia
May 29th – Savannah
June 5th – Tallapoosa
June 19th – Ringgold
July 17th – Augusta
July 31st – West Point
These events offer an opportunity to set up at the VIC with others in the Industry...a chance to show travelers how much we have to offer as a state. As always this is a FREE opportunity. For more information please contact the individual centers. Contact info can be found at
<http://web.georgia.org/net/content/search.aspx?s=0.0.26.3011&load=1&keyword=Georgia%20Visitor%20Information%20Center&maintitle=Georgia%20Visitor%20Information%20Centers&searchtype=Exact>

Jobs Available

- **Internet Marketing Manager**
The Savannah Convention & Visitors Bureau is seeking an Internet Marketing Manager to oversee and administrate multiple Web sites. The successful candidate will have three or more years of experience marketing through a variety of online channels and a strong knowledge of industry trends; as well as experience with overseeing Web site development, special Web-based projects, online advertising and SEO/SEM.

Ability to work in a very fast paced team-oriented environment with minimal supervision is a must. Bachelors Degree in Communications or related field and strong knowledge of Microsoft Office Suites, Adobe Photoshop, Quark, Adobe Acrobat, Macromedia Dreamweaver and HTML are required. Experience in tourism industry is helpful but not necessary.

E-mail cover letter and resume to pubrel@savannahvisit.com. No phone calls. EOE.

Dates to Remember

- **January 16, 2009** – Georgia Coast Travel Association meeting at the Inn at Ellis Square in Savannah. Everyone Welcome
- **January 23, 2009** – Georgia Creative Economies website launches
- **January 27, 2009** Tourism Day at the Capitol
- **February 6-8, 2009 - Building Creative Communities Conference** - Colquitt Georgia – for more info visit <http://www.buildingcreativecommunities.com/>
- **March 1-2, 2009** - Winter Chautauqua- SAVE THE DATE
- **March 9-11, 2009** - GACVB Winter Meeting –Jekyll Island Club Hotel - www.gacvb.com
- **March 29 – April** – Midwest Travel Writers Association Press Trip
- **April 8-11, 2009** - Travel South FAM on the Coast
- **April 20-21, 2009:** The **2009 Techno Tourism Conference** - Athens

PLEASE NOTE THAT MY CONTACT INFORMATION HAS CHANGED

Regional Contact Information

Carey Ferrara, Regional Tourism Representative; The Coast
Georgia Department of Economic Development
212 Pierpont Ave
Savannah, GA 31404
Office - 912-644-5975 * Cell - 678-640-4357
Email: cferrara@georgia.org