



HISTORIC HEARTLAND TRAVEL REGION

Regional Tourism Representative
September 2011 Report

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GEORGIA TOURISM DIVISION NEWS

- **Tourism Product Development Grant FY12 – Deadline Sept 30, 2011 -** Georgia Tourism and Georgia Council for the Arts, both divisions of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, have combined resources to offer the Tourism Product Development (TPD) Grants for the state's 2012 fiscal year. The TPD Grant, worth up to \$20,000, is designed to financially support tourism development activities at the local level that sustain and create jobs within Georgia's hospitality industry. The grant program also supports the role of the arts in tourism by providing financial assistance to Georgia's Creative Economies with an emphasis on professional Georgia artists and the non-profit arts industry. Guidelines and application at <http://www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Tourism/Programs/Pages/Grants.aspx>.
- **Please join me in welcoming Paul Selby to the Georgia Department of Economic Development as Director of the Visitor Information Center Program.** Paul brings more than 15 years of sales, customer service, and hospitality and tourism experience to the Tourism division. He previously served as Manager of Leisure Sales at the Georgia Aquarium. He also led the start-up of the Aquarium's call center, where he led a group of more than 25 operators handling consumer calls. Paul's email is pselby@georgia.org.
- Are you looking to blow the roof off your barn and maximize your agribusiness potential? Come and hear from local, regional, and national experts on **"who, what, where, when, and how" to expand your agribusiness partnerships, sales, and profits. Wed. September 21st - 8:00am–4:30pm at Ogeechee Technical College** in Statesboro.
- **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-click "Programs and Services" then click "Grants".
- **The Celebrating Rural Georgia Conference will be held in Tifton on October 12th.** Governor Nathan Deal will be speaking about rural Georgia. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Cobb at nancy.cobb@onegeorgia.org or call 404.679.4186.
- **Tourism Economic Impact Numbers for 2010** – They are now available, soon to be posted on www.MarketGeorgia.org under Research.

- **2012 Georgia Tourism Marketing Plan** – now available online at <http://www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Tourism/Programs/Pages/MarketingCampaigns.aspx>.
- **MOBILE EXPLOREGEORGIA.ORG** The Georgia Department of Economic Development has partnered with ITI-Marketing to develop a brand new, consumer friendly mobile site in September 2011 - m.ExploreGeorgia.org. This all new state-of-the-art mobile site is designed for the travel consumer on the go, with emphasis on functionality and features that enable easy access, advanced search and partner links and previews that will enable you to put your brand and your message in front of millions of Georgia travel consumers. With increasingly more travelers reaching for their mobile devices to search for destination and travel information, this mobile site will provide you an outstanding opportunity to interact with your target travel audience just as they are actively seeking your information. E-mail: info@iti-marketing.com or call (912) 267-1558 if you have any questions or would like more information.
- **Online VIC (Visitor Information Center) on ExploreGeorgia.org** – new design – instructions for uploading your brochure to the website and free display in the online brochure room at: <http://www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Tourism/ExploreGeorgiaInstructions/Pages/BrochureRoomProgram.aspx>
- **Request for Videos** – the GA Visitor Information Center (VIC) in Ringgold requests copies of videos on DVD promoting your community or attraction to play in the VIC for visitors. Contact Elaine Watkins, Mgr, Ringgold VIC ewatkins@georgia.org.
- **GDEcD will be participating in the AARP Life@50+ Expo September 22 - 24, 2011 in Los Angeles; CA.** AARP is expecting more than 25,000 members and others from all over the US and abroad to attend. The AARP Life@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. GDEcD is offering a trade co-op for this show - we will distribute your brochure to the attendees in exchange for you sending 300 lapel pins. For co-op information, please contact Pam Kruseck at pkruseck@georgia.org.
- **The Georgia National Fair will take place in Perry, GA from October 6 - 16, 2011.** 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. Please contact Dot Davis via email at ddavis@georgia.org for co-op information.
- **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 will allow maximum exposure to all attendees and provide us a better opportunity to sell Georgia. We are changing our level of participation this year for ABA and will be the show bag sponsor - as such we will offer co-sponsorship to our partners. Co-op information for both NTA and ABA 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 pperson@georgia.org.
- **Georgia Hotel/ Motel Lodging Tax Questions??** Jonathan Sharpe (DCA) is in charge of the department that oversees the Hotel Motel Tax collections. He is assisted by James Stevens who is their Hotel Motel Tax expert. If you have questions about Hotel/Motel taxes contact Jonathan Sharpe at 404-679-4996 or email jonathan.sharpe@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.
- **Peach Byte-**This monthly newsletter offers industry partners information Georgia Tourism happenings, Georgia news, industry trends and other marketing/pr opportunities. To sign up – send your email address to peachbyte@georgia.org.
- **Newest in the Georgia Tourism Newsletter Series– Civil War Newsletter:** Go to <http://gacivilwar.org/MailingList/Join> to sign up.
- **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. We are excited to be able offer you the opportunity to sell any of this commemorative merchandise in your welcome centers and gift shops. You may 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.

- **Still Not Camera Ready?** - Learn how at <http://www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Entertainment/FilmTV/cameraready/Pages/default.aspx>
- **Share your Photos** –You are welcome to send high res photos to Vickie Sanders for inclusion in GDEcD's photo database. Contact Vickie to see how best to send. vsanders@georgia.org.

COMING UP!

October 7, 2011: STS Top 20 Events deadline-for April, May and June 2012

January 6 2012: STS Top 20 Events deadline for July, August, September 2012

***Industry Calendar** – for a listing of tourism industry events such as conferences, trade shows, etc, visit the Industry Calendar at <http://www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Tourism/Pages/IndustryCalendar.aspx>