



NORTHEAST GEORGIA MOUNTAINS TRAVEL REGION

March 2011 Report

Cheryl Smith
Regional Tourism Representative
GA Dept of Economic Development
Office: 770-535-5757 ~ Cell: 678-640-4355
csmith@georgia.org

GEORGIA TOURISM DIVISION NEWS & UPDATE

- 🍊 The Emmis-provided “flipbook” or online version of the 2011 Travel Guide is now accessible on the ExploreGeorgia.org home page. The direct link is www.zinio.com/reader.jsp?issue=416152361&rf=ga_travel11&o=ext
- 🍊 **National Tourism Week** is May 7-15. A Toolkit available at www.ustravel.org/marketing/national-travel-and-tourism-week/toolkit
- 🍊 **Travel South Update:** Thank you to all our Northeast Georgia Mountains hosts. We had a great tour that has already resulted in several articles and blog postings.
- 🍊 **List of Georgia Visitor Information Centers – Georgia On My Mind Days** – Contact me if you would like list of dates.
- 🍊 **Tourism Day at the Capitol 2011 (County Level Economic Impact Sheets – All 159 Counties):**
www.georgia.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/Industries/Tourism/IndustryResearch/2011/county%20sheets%20011%20-%20159.pdf
- 🍊 **Travel Media Marketplace will be in Blue Ridge – Ellijay, May 12-14th.**
 - Northeast Georgia and Classic South will have a combined Post TMM Fam. The theme will be Culinary/Agri-Tourism. I am currently working on the itinerary with Jeannie.
 - Communities – PLEASE update your profile sheets from last year or create one if you didn’t have from last year and send to me as soon as possible. You don’t want to miss out on getting your info to these travel writers.
 - I need your help...I am working on providing updated info for the following themed profile sheets. If you have something new to provide on the following topics, please send to me as soon as possible:
 - What’s New
 - Music & Movies
 - Ag-Tourism
 - Culinary
 - Wineries & Appalachia
 - Civil War & Native American
 - Shopping & Spa
 - Small Towns & Trails
 - Cheap Dates & Free Things
- 🍊 **WWW.EXPLOREGEOORGIA.ORG & TIP(S) OF THE MONTH**
 - 🍊 The following was updated and now works on www.ExploreGeorgia.org :
 - Events Tagging for Civil War – You can now tag old events for civil, previously it was only newly created events.
 - Photo Tagging – If you tagged a photo in events, it did not show up on the consumer side. Now both attraction and events will display the tagged photo text.
 - Events with Pricing – Event pricing now shows on the consumer side. Previously, if you entered the Price, it did not show up for events, it did show on the attraction side.
 - 🍊 If you don’t input an **address and phone number** the public won’t know where your tourism business or event is or how to call for more information.

- 🍌 **Pictures are worth 1000 words**...actually more! Update your attraction, lodging or event listing with pictures so potential visitors can get a better idea of what to expect when they visit you!
 - 🍌 **Post events not advertisements for non-profit organizations.** The main purpose of www.ExploreGeorgia.org is to promote events that tourists and visitors can come enjoy. If they learn something about your non-profit organization, great, but that is not the primary purpose of posting events.
 - 🍌 Pictures need to be in jpg format.
 - 🍌 If you are Kid Friendly, put that in your Keywords
 - 🍌 If you can host a **conference** or **meeting** at your facility, make sure you list "conference" and/or "meeting facility" in the key word section and then include copy on the Full Description describing what you have.
 - 🍌 Go to your listing and click the Facebook "Like" icon
- 🍌 **Smith Travel Figures – January 2011 Summary** (Let me know if you want January Report)
- Hotel/motel occupancy increased 4.1% statewide in January 2011 from January 2010
 - January 2010 room rates (ADR) in Georgia were up slightly 0.6% from last January
 - Statewide, RevPAR was up 4.7%.
 - Georgia room revenues increased 5.3%
 - Room Demand increased 4.7%
 - Room Supply increased by 0.6% in the state from January 2010 to January 2011.
- 🍌 **Update on Domestic Sales Efforts:**
- 🍌 **Pam Kruseck** and **Nija Torrence** attended the **American Bus Association (ABA)** annual marketplace in Philadelphia, PA from January 8 - 12, 2011. The Georgia Tourism Division had a booth in the Network area on the Marketplace floor. The Georgia Tourism booth featured profile sheets from each of our nine travel regions along with information from our State Parks and our sponsors. Thank you to our three sponsors who had great exposure in our sponsor booth - **Jekyll Island Authority, Douglasville CVB** and **Henry County Chamber of Commerce**.
 - 🍌 **Sharon Alvin** and **Shawnta Beasley** attended the **Great Vacations Expo** in Columbus, OH January 21 - 23, 2011. Attendance for the show was 14,016! Thank You to **Blairsville - Union County Chamber of Commerce, Macon Cherry Blossom Festival, Stay In Savannah** and **Old Town Trolley Tours** for partnering with the Georgia Tourism division on this show.
 - 🍌 **Margie Chamberlain** and **Pamela Maynard** attended the **Southern Women's Show** in Savannah February 4 - 6, 2011. It was our first consumer show with our new **2011 Travel Guide** and it was a big hit! 11,300 people attended the show. Thank you to **St. Simons Island Inn by the Lighthouse** and **St. Simons Island Trolley Tours** for providing a "Girlfriends Getaway trip to Saint Simons Island!"
 - 🍌 **Pam Kruseck** attended **North Carolina Motorcoach Annual Meeting** and Marketplace February 3 - 6, 2011 in Wilmington, NC. Tour Operators met with suppliers during Marketplace appointments as well as educational seminars and networking events. Thank you to the **Cartersville CVB, Athens CVB, Warner Robins CVB** and **Museum of Aviation** for participating in the co-op!
 - 🍌 **Pam Kruseck** attended **Bank Travel Conference** February 6 - 8, 2011 in Baton Rouge, LA. Bank Directors, Group Leaders and Alumni Associations had appointments with suppliers during scheduled appointments. Thank you to the **Athens CVB, Warner Robins CVB** and **Museum of Aviation** for partnering with us!
- 🍌 **Update on International Sales Efforts -- Nouvelles Frontieres, a French Tour Operator**, visited Atlanta in late 2010. The visit was made possible by the support of the **ACVB** and **Brandon Barnes**. Though the visit occurred during the "Great Snowstorm," they were still able to see many sites and were very upbeat about the potential for Georgia in the French market
- 🍌 **Camera Ready Program: Go to www.georgia.org/cameraready** for information on the Georgia Camera Ready. Once the next round is announced NE GA will only have four that are not Camera Ready!

REGIONAL NEWS

- 🍌 The **Schaefer Center** in Toccoa closed its doors recently
- 🍌 **Cabbage Patch Kids** made Time Magazine's list of All TIME 100 Greatest Toys
- 🍌 **Call for Entries** - The Georgia Piedmont Arts Center (GPAC) in Auburn, GA is seeking entries for their Spring Tent Festival – "Spring Phling" – to be held on the lawn at the GPAC cottage in Auburn. All art exhibited/sold must be original work by the exhibiting artisan. \$40 for GPAC Members and \$50 for non-GPAC members. For more information and any questions, please phone Kathleen Gill at 404-202-3044 or visit web site to pick up an application. Application also attached. www.GeorgiaPiedmontArtsCenter.com
- 🍌 **Blairsville is now an Appalachian Trail Community**
- 🍌 **Dahlonega is now an Appalachian Trail Community**

TRAVEL & INDUSTRY TRENDS

Contact me if you would like a copy of SURVEYS, INDUSTRY, MARKETING & TRAVEL TRENDS...




- 🍌 New Study Details Impact of Meetings on U.S. Economy
- 🍌 American Express Study Links Business Travel to Corporate Growth
- 🍌 Radisson to Start Charging Non-Loyalty Members for Internet
- 🍌 How Will the Hotel Fitness Center Evolve?
- 🍌 Packaging: "Price Is What You Pay; Value Is What You Get"

MEDIA REQUESTS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, ARTICLES AND INDUSTRY NEWS

- 🍌 **Media Request:** "We're working on a story for our July/August issue - the region's friendliest towns. So we'd like to hear about your favorite(s) -- those cities and towns you love to visit, or love living in, because they make you feel welcome. "Friendly" can cover a lot, when it comes to describing a community -- its people, its walkability, how it takes care of its citizens, how intergenerational it is, what kinds of festivals, events, amenities it's home to, how creative it is in attracting travelers and newcomers. Maybe it's the balance of "mom and pop" businesses to big boxes, or the number of comfort food restaurants where you can walk in and order "the usual," or maybe it's a really active newcomers group that reaches out to new folks in warm and individual ways. Maybe it's the number of parks or park benches, the number of dogs, the kid-friendliness, a town mascot, an annual parade, a great farmer's market where everyone buys their vegetables. So along with your vote, we'd like to hear specifically WHY this town is the friendliest -- and the more reasons you can tell us, the better. And please spread the word through your mailing lists, Facebook pages, Twitter feeds, etc. E mail your votes to cmodisett@leisurepublishing.com". Thanks in advance! Cara Ellen Modisett, Editor at Large, Blue Ridge Country magazine
- 🍌 At the recent Winter Chautauqua, I attended a session on **Quilt Trail Development**. This is a great **Asset Based Tourism Development** project that will bring folks into your communities and generate sales for local quilters. Please let me know if you are interested.
- 🍌 **Job Opportunities** –
 - Go to www.southeasttourism.org/about/jobs.html for postings of available job openings
 - Megan Drew will be leaving the Clayton County CVB to join the Macon CVB. Contact me for a copy of the job announcement
 - Stephen Smith is leaving the Dahlonega-Lumpkin County CVB. He will be going to work at Wolf Mountain Vineyards. Contact me for a copy of the job announcement.

GRANTS & FUNDING SOURCES

- 🍌 **List of Grants & Other Funding Sources** - Information on grant programs and other funding sources - www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Tourism/Programs/Pages/Grants.aspx#other

-  **Funding initiatives through Georgia State Parks** - The following is a URL for two programs (the "Land and Water Conservation Fund" and the "Recreational Trails Program"). The Coastal region has utilized these grants for tourism related projects: www.gastateparks.org/net/content/page.aspx?s=8084.0.1.5&siteid=5&wrapid=1
-  **List of Funding Sources for Historic Preservation Projects (Georgia Historic Preservation Division)**
 This is a long and extensive list...be sure to check it out periodically for new funding opportunities.
www.gashpo.org/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=213&utm_source=Georgia+Historic+Preservation+Division+e-newsletters&utm_campaign=505ab88541-Preservation+Georgia+Online+June+26-July+2+2010&utm_medium=email
-  **HPD announces new Historic Theater Heritage Tourism Grant** - HPD has partnered with the Georgia Department of Economic Development 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. Click here for more information or call Grants Coordinator Carol Moore at 404-463-8434.

SAVE THE DATE!

-  Mar. 6-7 – Winter Chautauqua Tourism Conference – Cartersville www.winterchautauqua.com
-  March 11-15 – ITB, Berlin, Germany
-  March 21-23 – STS Spring Meeting/SETTRA Symposium – Destin, FL
-  Mar. 23-25 – RVIC Workshop – Albany
-  Mar 31 – Apr 1 – Statewide Preservation Conference, Macon
-  April 8 – STS Top 20 Events deadline for events in October, November, December 2011
-  April 8-10 – Southeast Travel Show
-  April 14-16 – Southern Women's Show
-  May 7-15 – **National Travel & Tourism Week**
-  May 12-14 – Travel Media Marketplace – Blue Ridge/Ellijay
-  July 8 – STS Top 20 Events deadline for events in January, February, March 2012
-  September 11-14 - Georgia's Governor's Conference on Tourism – Macon, GA
-  October 7 – STS Top 20 Events deadline for events in April, May, June 2012

Tourism Industry Calendar – For a listing of tourism industry events such as conferences, trade shows, etc., go to www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Tourism/Pages/IndustryCalendar.aspx.