



**Georgia Dept of Economic Development
Northeast Georgia Mountains Travel Region
August 2008 Report**

Cheryl Smith, Regional Tourism Representative
Phone: 770-535-5757 Fax: 770-535-5732
Email: csmith@georgia.org

Note: You can read previous reports by going to www.marketgeorgia.org and clicking on Monthly Regional Reports and clicking on Northeast Georgia Mountains.

GEORGIA TOURISM DIVISION NEWS/ACTIVITIES

- **Don't forget to register for the Governor's Conference on Tourism in Albany, September 12-15. Go to www.marketgeorgia.org.**
- **Updated Tourism Research –**
 - Check out the latest research as well as Tourism at Glance info from the Georgia Tourism Division. Go to www.marketgeorgia.org. Click on Industry Research.
 - County figures will be available August 25th
 - TSA Tool - Compares Tourism (apples to apples) with other industries and looks at the total GDP, including capital investment. We have asked that they run the TSA for 2006 so we can release the comparison numbers. Once Nerissa and Carole are trained, there will be training available to RTA meetings or some other time that works for the industry
 - Research reports, research newsletter and any related information is being posted on www.marketgeorgia.org
 - Reports such as the ESRI report are things that we would like to offer out as a coop if there is interest.
 - Visitor Volume and Demographics – An independent research panel was pulled together to rate the effectiveness, customer service, etc of the top three tourism research companies (currently DK Shiflet, TNS and I think Longwood). The findings will be presented to the State Tourism Directors at E.S.T.O. (8/23-26/08).
- **Georgia Visitor Information Center Marketing Opportunities & News:**
 - **Georgia's Visitor Information Centers Win International Marketing Award ~ Recognized with Mercury Award for Canadian marketing program (Read about it in Peach Bytes)**
 - Welcome to "Fall in Georgia" at the Tallapoosa Visitor Center (I-20 east on the Georgia/Alabama line). The FALL CELEBRATION will be Thursday & Friday October 2 & 3, 2008 from 10am to 2pm. Come and Promote your County, Town, Properties, Eateries, Shops and much more. For more information or questions call 770-574-2621 or email tallapoosa@georgia.org. Thank you for coming & celebrating with us. **Please bring your own tables and chairs.**
 - **The Georgia Visitor Information Center at Ringgold, Georgia will host a Fall Colors of Georgia - A celebration of Fairs, Festivals & Foliage throughout the State on September 26, 2008 from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm.** As we anticipate cooler weather, turning of the leaves, country fairs and fall festivals, we invite our industry partners to join us and promote colorful events and areas all across our beautiful State. **Entertainment by the Georgia Mountain Boys.** Please bring your own table & chairs – booths will be located outside). RSVP or questions / phone 706-937-4211 / fax 706-937-2850 or by email Ringgold@Georgia.org.
 - The **Columbus VIC** would like to extend an invitation to all Travel Regions to host a promotional days. Please discuss at your next association meeting and contact us with a prospective date. Several Plantation Trace partners hosted a successful day on July 25th! A few things to keep in mind...
 - We have limited inside space however we can accommodate four 2ft x 4ft tables or card tables.
 - Lots of outside space available (please provide tent, tables, chairs).
 - Wed, Thurs, Fri, and Sat are usually busier days. (pending season)
 - We'll try to help determine the busier days of the season.

Contact: Rita Hughes, Manager, Georgia Visitor Center, 1751 Williams Road, Columbus, GA 31904
Ph: 706-649-7455 Fax: 706-649-1291 rhughes@georgia.org



- November is a time of great fun & anticipation at the **Georgia Visitor Center in Tallapoosa** invites you to join them on Friday, November 7th from 10am-2pm as they promote holiday festivities in Georgia. They would like to include you. If its holiday related, please join them on this day to promote your event, attraction, city, corn maze or pumpkin patch. Reserve your spot by calling in advance by the 30th of October. For more information call 770-574-2621 or email: tallapoosa@georgia.org. **Please bring your own table and chairs.**
- **The Georgia Music Hall of Fame is working on compiling a comprehensive list of all the music festivals held in the state of Georgia annually.** The GMHF is trying to develop a list of festivals that would be beneficial for them to attend and/or potentially partner with. Also, the Georgia Music Magazine tries to publish a list as well but due to lead times doesn't always get the information in time. **Criteria: Music is the primary objective of the festival.** If you have a festival that meets the criteria, please send me the (1) name of the festival, (2) town where it's located, and (3) the general date, i.e. September. These events need to be posted on www.ExploreGeorgia.org.
- **Save the Date:** November 5-6, 2008 Agritourism Conference ~ **see calendar at end of report.**

NE GA MTNS TOURISM INDUSTRY NEWS

- ***Dahlongaweddings.com is Launched*** - Dahlongaweddings.com is North Georgia's first wedding planning website, and is now available to Lumpkin County businesses, exclusively. This new business will participate in the Georgia Aquarium's "Under the Sea Bridal Show" August 17, 2008, where Dahlonega will have its debut as North Georgia's #1 Wedding Destination. We would like to thank all of the participating businesses in Lumpkin County, and invite local businesses who offer wedding services, to [visit Dahlongaweddings.com](http://visitDahlongaweddings.com). We look forward to hearing from you! Wedding photo taken by Chamber member, Kenny & Cindy Simmons of [The Frog Hollow Company](http://TheFrogHollowCompany.com).
- **40 Years of Mark of the Potter ~ A Birthday Celebration right around the corner!** by Muddy Wenn Collier: Not much has changed since 1969: the trout still congregate in the shoals awaiting handouts from visitors, the shop folks have stories and laughter in abundance to share, and, more importantly, generations of family members return, year after year, to share the experience and their memories of a treasured landmark: Mark of the Potter on Scenic Hwy 197, in Clarkesville. Mark of the Potter still reflects the mission and image first fostered those many years ago. With our 40th birthday right around the corner, we at Mark of the Potter want to celebrate by honoring all those friends and visitors that just "stop by" to see what's new, feed the fish and see how we are doing. We are putting together a new history book of our little shop, but the focus will be on the memories and stories of all our visitors and friends. Please share with us any funny tales, memories of Grandpa Watts' Mill and the early Mark of the Potter days, or family photos passed and present that are unique. Do you have a picture of your parents or grandparents in front of Grandpa Watts' Mill? We would love to take a picture to match of the next generation in the same pose! Please, help us ring in our 40th birthday in style! Send stories and copies of photos to:



Mark of the Potter
c/o Muddy the Potter
9982 Hwy 197 North, Clarkesville, GA 30523
Email: markpott@hemc.net

Don't forget to give us your contact information and details of any photos submitted. We can't wait to hear from you!

- **Comings & Goings....**
 - Hal Williams has resigned from the Dahlonega – Lumpkin County Chamber & CVB. "After 33 years of association the with the Dahlonega Chamber as a member, board member, Chairman and employee, the time has come to close this chapter. " Hal...we will miss your dedication, expertise and willingness to promote not only Dahlonega and Lumpkin County, but Northeast Georgia and the state of Georgia. **You have been a great partner in tourism!**
 - Rita Morgan will be retiring in January. She has done a wonderful job in marketing and promoting Helen & White County. **You have also been a great partner in tourism!** Rita says...if you know of someone that

would be interested in this position, please contact her or forward resume to her attention at Helen CVB, PO Box 730, Helen, GA 30545.

- Rhonda Lunsford, President of the Rabun County Chamber has resigned. We will miss you and all you've done over the years to promote Georgia Tourism and the Southern Highroads Trail!
- **Tour De Tugaloo** - Tour the Tugaloo River, Saturday, November 1, 2008, and experience nature at its finest! Terrain is flat to hilly with beautiful vistas, three choices of loops, oodles of wildlife and fabulous fall colors. Metric Century (62 miles), 41.5, 20.5, or 5 mile options. For more information visit www.tourdetugaloo.com.
- The producers have just finished the bulk of the post-production work on the four part PBS series **APPALACHIA: A History of Mountains and People** and the trailer is now on www.YouTube.com. Check it out www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNxziqRTzjQ
- The **Chestatee Wildlife Preserve** in Dahlonega, www.Chestateewildlife.com now has a helicopter landing pad. We are excited to be able to bring visitors in for tours using helicopter tour companies and private owners. If you know anyone or a company that I should contact to share this information with, please let me know. This will be a wonderful new way to show off our North Georgia attraction!
- Mary Boland announced: "We are pleased to announce the publication of our new visitors' guide, **Explore Rabun**. Copies are available at the Rabun County Welcome Center. We'd love to hear your feedback and suggestions for future editions!"
- **Hoschton Fall Festival**: www.hoschtonfallfestival.com ~ This small northeastern Georgia town's population boom is frightening. In a bid to break a world record for scarecrows and scare up some fun for the fall season, thousands of straw-stuffed newcomers are creeping across town. There's a scuba diver, the Georgia Bulldogs football team and — of course — the cast of the Wizard of Oz. Even likenesses of Jesus and Elvis popped up. (enlarge photo) Horace Johnson, right, and Theresa Kenerly joke with Chad Orr as they wait outside to help with scarecrow building Wednesday Aug. 27, 2008, in Hoschton, Ga. The residents of Hoschton hope to break the Guinness World Record for 'Most Scarecrows in One Location.' (AP Photo/John Amis) The 1,700 real residents of Hoschton hope to nearly triple their population with 4,000 scarecrows and break the Guinness World Record for "Most Scarecrows in One Location." The title belongs to the Cincinnati Horticultural Society's Cincinnati Flower and Farm Fest, which set the record in 2003 with 3,311 scarecrows. Antique dealer Robbie Bettis and her husband, Fred, are leading the effort for the town's fall festival, which begins Monday. On Wednesday they watched over an assembly line at an old downtown train depot, where about 20 people passed wooden frames among tables of dingy clothes, yellow milk jugs, plastic grocery bags, old hats, twine, ribbon and other donated materials. "We thought if we gave people something fun to do then maybe they will forget about the difficult economy," she said. "Winning the world record is just a byproduct." Crows and criminals beware: Two men caught knocking over scarecrows were sentenced to build 25 of them, lest they face trespassing charges, Mayor Bill Copenhaver said.

MEDIA REQUESTS, GRANTS, WORKSHOPS, ETC

- **AAA Going Places has updated their contact information to submit events to What's Happening.** Please send information at least 90 days in advance to: goingplaces@aaasouth.com or mail to: AAA Going Places/What's Happening, 1515 N. Westshore Blvd., Tampa, FL 33607.
- **101 Ways to Promote Your Tourism Business Web Site** - www.susansweeney.com/tourismbook.html
- **Search Engines...Thanks to Jeff Mills for this bit of info:** Many of us are prompted to use Google as it is a default on our computers. Here's a new search engine that you might like to try. The results are very intriguing and the layout much different from what you would expect. Try it—you might like it as much as I do thus far. It is a subject search engine, so type in a subject/keyword(s) and see what happens. www.cuil.com
- **Tidbits from Randall Travel Marketing:**
 - **Guys Only Getaways** ~ Men interested in "guys only" getaways want sports activities (37%), outdoor recreation such as hiking or boating (35%), and food/restaurants (35%). **Source: Beam Global Spirits & Wine**
- Check out the new GA CVB website: www.gacvb.com

- **Brown's Guides:** Check out Fred's blog on how rivers should be considered a tourism asset at <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs048/1101877929784/archive/1102212146657.html>
- **Media Requests:**
 - John Carter is now publishing a web newsletter/magazine intended for those who own property on or in the general area of Lake Hartwell and those who are considering visiting the area. Please send any information or press releases with news or feature information that might be of interest to this group to LakeNews@BellSouth.net. News or features could involve any tourism attraction or event suitable for a day trip from the Lake Hartwell Area. LakeFrontHartwell.com (An E-newsletter) LakeNews@bellsouth.net (864) 613-0015
 - **Freelance Writer Looking for Press Release, Information, Etc., that Represent Southeastern U.S. Destinations** - I currently oversee a southern travel blog, Southern Byways, www.southernbyways.com that receives on average 25,000 hit/month. I am interested in receiving releases, information, etc. that pertains to happenings, openings, activities and really anything in regards to my coverage area. The area I cover is from Arkansas to D.C. If you represent anything at all in the area, please include me on any press release distributions.
Apryl Chapman Thomas
Email: apryl@aprylchapmanthomas.com
Freelance Writer
Website: www.actwriter.com
Publication: www.southernbyways.com
- **Articles (Call me for a copy):** None this month.
- **Marketing/Advertising Opportunities:**
 - **Jeff Mills sent the following (Thanks, Jeff!) ... Recent results from e-mail blast to some military bases. THEY WANT 4" x 9" rack cards from hotels and attractions. 50-75 to each address should be sufficient.**
 - Please send rack cards to the Leisure Travel Office, Bldg 443, 778 Gulick Ave, Fort Stewart, GA 31314
 - Sure, we're having a fair next month. Need all the help we can get. Thanks for thinking about us.
Dorothy M Rickman
MWR
Defense Supply Center Richmond
8000 Jefferson Davis Highway
Bldg 33 D, dockside, room 11
Richmond, VA 23297-5000
804-279-1091
DSN:804-279-1091
FAX: 279-3944
 - We can use anything you would like to send us, thank you!! We do send lots of folks to that area.
Dana Spalding
ITR- Information Tickets and Reservations Program Manager
(334) 255-9517
Bldg 5700
Rm 130 Novosel Street
P.O. Drawer 620189
Fort Rucker, AL 36362-0189
 - Sure, send it on! Our address is:
Diane Campbell Recreation Center
BLDG 3711 Aerobee Rd
Redstone Arsenal, AL 35898
 - Always interested in any deals we can offer our military people. They can use all the deals and discounts we can get. Yes please send me brochure/rack cards.
Deloris Gardner
Ticket & Tours
Bldg. 4- 2171 Reilly Rd (mini Mall)
Ft. Bragg, NC 28310

- Bank of America is partnering with the Institute of Museum and Library Services to provide grants to small museums, libraries, and archives. The grants will raise awareness and fund preservation of treasures held in small museums, libraries and archives. Grants will help to preserve specific items, including works of art, artifacts and historical documents that are in need of conservation. Applicants will build on completed conservation assessments of their collections, to ensure that the Bank of America/IMLS grants are used in accordance with best practices in the field, and underscore the importance of assessment planning. Deadline: September 15, 2008.
<http://www.ims.gov/collections/grants/boa.htm>
- Nominations Sought for the 2009 Dozen Distinctive Destinations List Nominations are now open to Convention & Visitors Bureaus & Chambers of Commerce for the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2009 Dozen Distinctive Destinations list. The application fee is \$150. Nominations are due on Friday, **August 29, 2008** - [Apply online at www.PreservationNation.org/ddd](http://www.PreservationNation.org/ddd).
- **Request:** Can you provide me with names and locations of bed and breakfasts, or other lodging, on a working farm within 3-4 hours of Atlanta, GA with opportunities for children to participate in farm activities and chores. The farm should have a variety of animals. Thank you. Brad Malkin malkins@bellsouth.net
- **News from GA DCA:**
 - Georgia Historical Markers Project ~ GA DCA has compiled and published a statewide database of Georgia historical markers. Go to www.georgiaplanning.com/hm/.
 - GA DCA's previous newsletters are being added to the DCA website for your review. Please visit www.dca.state.ga.us and click on the "News & Events" page on the page's left side.
- **Traditional Artists...You're invited to demonstration and sell your wares at the Harvest Festival at Historic Westville in Lumpkin, GA.** Lots of visitation for 11 days of activities for young & old. October 25-November 8-2008 ~ Tuesday – Saturday from 10a – 5p (closed Sunday & Monday) www.westville.org/cotton_pickin.htm. It's gonna be a Cotton Pickin' Good Time. Contact Patty Cannington 888-733-1850 or patty@westville.org
- **Study Looks at What Consumers Want on Travel Websites** ~ A recent study by **Kerry Bodine** at [Forrester Research, Inc.](http://ForresterResearch.com) focused on "what consumers want on travel websites." Study findings include:
 - 1) Many** consumers (33-46 percent of those surveyed) want:
 - special offers/coupons
 - user ratings/reviews
 - product or price comparison tools
 - customer testimonials [which is similar to "user ratings/reviews" above]
 - 2) Some** consumers (18-20 percent of those surveyed) want:
 - product videos
 - ability to subscribe to email alerts or RSS feeds
 - ability to personalize the site or create a personal profile
 - 3) Few** consumers (12 percent or below of those surveyed) want:
 - quizzes or questionnaires
 - ability to upload or view your own content
 - entertaining games

Despite variations among the generations (18-27 years vs. 63+years), the overall pattern remained the same as above. For example, "special offers" interested 50 percent of Younger Boomers and 35 percent of Seniors, yet it was still the #1 interest of all choices for both groups. Most interesting is that *nothing* was desired by a majority (over 50 percent) and that Seniors (63+) demand the least. But the trends suggest that visitors will increasingly want websites that can help them save money and find out what others have to say about the site and nearby destinations. The entire article is available for a fee at the [website](http://www.forrester.com). (www.forrester.com)

- **Are You Part of the RenGen?** Are you wary of marketing messages that are just a little too slick? Do you value authenticity over perfection? Are you concerned about the environment? Do you want to be more engaged with the organizations you care about and not just someone who buys a ticket or makes a donation once a year?

If you answered 'yes,' then regardless of your age, race, income or education, you are part of the new Renaissance Generation or the RenGen. According to Patricia Martin, author of *RenGen: The Rise of the Cultural Consumer and What it Means to Your Business*, today's cultural consumer can't be pigeonholed into the same old categories. Audiences are more defined by their interests and behaviors rather than the usual marketing demographics. This new

perspective indicates that a change is needed in how arts and culture organizations market to and engage their audiences.

For more information:

The RenGen Manifesto (PDF) http://patricia-martin.com/pm_downloads/Patricia_Martin_RenGen_Manifesto.pdf

Patricia Martin talks about the RenGen:

Part 1 www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBX0Kpd8yHo

Part 2 www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ofgl3xw2as&feature=related

- **For Sale:** This beautiful 4,000 sq ft building in Clarkesville has been renovated inside and out. A large fireplace makes the front dining room extra cozy. Another dining room in the back is perfect for private parties. The parking lot has been expanded and paved. The new walk-in fridge and freezer is 19 feet deep. Outside the back door is a two-level wooden deck with umbrella tables. A huge gazebo in the back yard overlooking Rocky Branch Creek adds to the setting. Although it has been a restaurant in the past, this building would be great for an events facility, professional offices, daycare center or even a retail outlet.



- **Call for Artists...The Lodge at Tallulah Falls is open!** A committee from the GA Federation of Women's Clubs is putting the finishing touches on the décor and they would love to have the walls of the public areas graced with work by local artists. They are inviting the artists of **Rabun, Habersham and Stephens Counties** to participate in a regional consignment program that would commit their work of art to the Lodge at Tallulah Falls for a period of three months. The Lodge will market this program and will have handouts that collectively feature each artist showing their work. The hand out will include a short paragraph of information to include name, medium used, artistic inspiration, gallery affiliated and price of work. This hand out will be attractively done and be at the front desk and in the guest rooms. Available wall space includes the lobby, dining room, conference room, and guest room hallways. Topics of pictures must be local elements of nature that will give our visitors a better understanding of the depth and beauty of our region beyond our highways. We would like to acquaint our guests with area wildlife, lakes, streams and waterfalls, farms and barns, and mountain vistas. All size art can be used, but currently there is space for only 5-7 large pieces. Art would be sold with 80% of the selling price going to the artist and 20% to the Lodge. Should you be interested please send a digital image to me at nplate@thelodgeattallahfalls.com. A committee has been established to review and choose the work based on balance of topics, size and medium of work. We would like to get this project completed prior to our grand opening on September 18th so we are asking for your submissions as soon as possible. **Contact Georgia Heritage Center for the Arts at ghca2@alltel.net**

SAVE THE DATE

Go to www.marketgeorgia.org and click on **Travel Industry Events**. Contact me if you would like to submit a tourism industry event (meeting, conference, etc.)

- September 9** **Hotel Tax Seminar**, Toccoa, GA For more information, contact Cindy Eidson at 404-679-3101 or email her at ceidson@dca.state.ga.us
- September 10-12** **Georgia Governor's Conference on Tourism** Presented By GDEcD, GA CVB, And TDAG Albany, GA
- September 13** **The Entrepreneurial Artist Workshop** (9am-5pm). This is an ADCG Presentatio) - Wild Child Arts, 120 N Wayne Street, Monroe, GA 30655. 770-266-7437 wildchildart@yahoo.com
- September 13** **The Visual Performing Arts Seminar:** 8:30am to 5:00pm. The Clayton County Performing Arts Center, 2530 Mt. Zion Parkway , Jonesboro, Georgia. Advance registration is only \$35 per person and includes the seminar, lunch, morning and afternoon breaks. Day of event registration is \$50 per person. Parking is free at the beautiful Clayton Performing Arts Center. Call 404-822-9057 or email southsideartsagenda@comcast.net. Go to <http://southsideartsagenda.com> to receive a seminar brochure and registration form. Pre-register to save time and money on Seminar Day!

September 23

How To Start A Bed & Breakfast: A program from the UGA Small Business Development Center from 9am-Noon at 1180 E Broad Street, Athens, GA. Cost is \$49. Learn about local & state regulations, marketing tips, and success factors. Plus, meet Dave Shearon of Ashford Manor and hear his success story! Register at www.athenssbdc.org or call 706.542.7436

November 5-6

2008 Agritourism Conference 2008 Agritourism Conference

"Regionalism: The Key to Expanding our Agritourism Footprint"

Georgia National Fairgrounds & Agricenter, Perry, Georgia

Travel Industry Futurist, **Judy Randall**, will combine education and entertainment to create "edutainment" as she shares trends and benchmarks that will help Georgia broaden its agritourism footprint...Agritourism best practices + resources + marketing + professional development + tours + regional programs + grants + funding + cooperative advertising safety + insurance + risk management + product development + promotions local, state and federal agency representatives + agriculture vendors + networking

For more information contact Carla M. Wood, 706-583-0347 or carlam@uga.edu

Online registration available August 25, 2008 at www.areg.ceas.uga.edu