



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

**Cheryl Smith, Regional Tourism Representative**  
Phone: 770-535-5757 Fax: 770-535-5732  
Email: [csmith@georgia.org](mailto:csmith@georgia.org)

**Note:** You can read previous reports by going to [www.marketgeorgia.org](http://www.marketgeorgia.org) and clicking on Monthly Regional Reports and clicking on Northeast Georgia Mountains.

## **GEORGIA TOURISM DIVISION NEWS/ACTIVITIES**

- **Northeast Georgia Mountains Regional Tourism Rep Activities/Projects/News:**
  - Currently working on an itinerary for travel writer, Lazelle Jones for early fall
  - Recently worked with Janet Cochran on directions for Appalachian Foothills Parkway website, [www.AppalachianFoothillsParkway.org](http://www.AppalachianFoothillsParkway.org)
  - Currently proofing features and regional opener for 2009 Georgia Travel Guide...is shaping up and looking awesome!
  - Working on updating department's Media Profile Sheet for the NE GA Mtns
  - Working on an itinerary for S.A.T.W. Central States participants scheduled for April 5-8, 2009
  - Sent out info on NTA Marketplace Sponsorship – November 2008 & ABA Marketplace Sponsorship – January 2009 (let me know if you'd like info...)
  - In discussion with Daniel Nichols regarding a regional video project
  - Also, please don't forget to update your listing on [www.ExploreGeorgia.org](http://www.ExploreGeorgia.org) – you don't want the lack of info or wrong info to keep visitors from visiting you!
  - Southern Highroads is
    - beginning to work on reprinting their brochure, contact Steve Bailey if you are interested in advertising in the brochure...go to [www.southernhighroads.org](http://www.southernhighroads.org) or call him at 706-633-6706
    - will be updating their homepage soon
  - Don't forget to register for the Governor's Conference on Tourism (Albany, GA) September 10-12, 2008 Go to [www.MarketGeorgia.org](http://www.MarketGeorgia.org) to register.
  - We are planning a North Georgia (hopefully in late August) and an Atlanta meeting for our tourism partners to give you an overview and hands on opportunity to learn how to create/update listings on [www.ExploreGeorgia.org](http://www.ExploreGeorgia.org). I will let you know where and when these will take place as soon as they are arranged.
  - Just found out that the CVBs & Chambers CAN have a listing on [www.ExploreGeorgia.org](http://www.ExploreGeorgia.org). They need to be similar to the way the Macon CVB has done theirs.
  - I will be sending out info on the ARES, Advanced Reservations System Inc as soon as it becomes available.
- Please join GDEcD – Tourism Division in welcoming **Mandy McCullough** as our new Tourism Regional Representative for the Historic Heartland region, which includes Macon, Athens, Milledgeville and the Lake Oconee area (which she shares with Jeannie Buttrum), among other great destinations. Mandy is an experienced tourism professional who knows the region well, having worked for five years at Cuscowilla Resort on Lake Oconee in sales and for one year at the Lodge on Lake Oconee. She also has experience in hotels in Savannah and Charleston. We are excited to have Mandy's experience and enthusiasm on the team.
- I wanted to let you know the new **GA Dream Pass** Sales brochure was recently released. Let me know if you would like info on this program. Also, sign up for your FREE GA **Dream Pass** card today! Check out [www.exploregeorgia.org/DreamPass](http://www.exploregeorgia.org/DreamPass). I have a Q and A sheet that will be very beneficial in answering any questions you might have about the Georgia Dream pass. There is even a line for you to input your offer so there is no confusion when the consumers present their card. If you are a Dream Pass Partner, take a few minutes to go to [www.exploregeorgia.org/dreampass](http://www.exploregeorgia.org/dreampass) to view your listing. Chris Grider will be making phone calls in the next week to

confirm the information that you have on your profile is current and see if there is any information that needs to be updated. His contact info is as follows:

Christopher Grider, Account Manager  
Georgia Dream Pass Partner Agency  
direct: 770-330-8116  
Cgrider@georgia.org  
[www.exploregeorgia.org/DreamPass](http://www.exploregeorgia.org/DreamPass)

- **Recently Katie Baasen conducted a Group Tour Boot Camp.** I have copies of several of the Power Point presentations: ROI, Georgia Group Strategy, Group Tour 101, and Fams. Let me know if you'd like a copy of any or all of them.
- If you don't get **Peach Bytes** you are missing out on the information such as the following:
  1. [2008 Governor's Tourism Conference - Registration Information](#)
  2. [Georgia's Tourism Partners Awarded \\$1 Million In Grant Funds](#)
  3. [Inaugural Tourism Product Development Grants Announced](#)
  4. [STS Marketing College - July 27-August 1](#)
  5. [The Travel Promotion Act Has Garnered 222 Co-Sponsors In The U.S. House Of Representatives](#)
  6. [Cobb County Cvb Achieves Destination Marketing Accreditation](#)
  7. [Callaway Gardens® Announces William Justus As New Executive Chef](#)
  8. [Savannah Makes Travel + Leisure Magazine's Top Cities In U.S. And Canada List](#)
  9. [Wine Report 2008 Names Georgia's Persimmon Creek Vineyards To Top 10 "Fastest Improving Producers" List](#)
  10. [GDEcD Sales Team Update](#)
  11. [Travel Trends: Airlines Turn Boarding Passes Into Ad Space](#)
  12. [13\) Travel Trends: Why Time Off Is Time Well Spent For Your Health](#)
  13. [14\) Travel Trends: In Quest For Less Stress, It's Auto Over Airplane](#)
  14. [15\) Travel Trends: A Room, Plus Relief At Pump](#)
  15. [16\) Travel Trends: Social Media Continues To Grow In Importance](#)
  16. [17\) GDEcD Welcomes New Historic Heartland Regional Tourism Rep](#)

To sign-up yourself or someone else up for this monthly newsletter, please email [peachbyte@georgia.org](mailto:peachbyte@georgia.org).

## **NE GA MTNS TOURISM INDUSTRY NEWS**

- The **441 Heritage Highway** photo tour is now live! Partner counties are encourages to check out the website and peruse through the tours and let Heather Kennedy ([hdkennedy@alltel.net](mailto:hdkennedy@alltel.net)) know if you see anything that needs to be changed/updated. She tried to catch as much as she could before it went live but sometimes things slip through. The tour is listed under both the Visitors section as well as Media. She hopes everyone is pleased and hopes more partner communities will get involved and post their photos! **Kudos to Heather!** [www.441heritagehighway.org/](http://www.441heritagehighway.org/)
- **Banks County News launches new website.** BanksNewsTODAY.com to provide on-line news updates. A new source of community information is being launched this week by The Banks County News — [www.BanksNewsTODAY.com](http://www.BanksNewsTODAY.com) (The site is not case sensitive; capital letters are used only for clarity.) News will be updated daily, or at least several times each week, to give readers the latest information on what is going on in Banks County. Viewers can also sign up to be informed by email alert any time something is added to the site. At the top of the page, click on "email alert" and sign up. The new BanksNewsTODAY.com site will allow viewers to add comments to articles. The BanksNewsTODAY site will all have real-time updating on election night July 15. Results will be updated by staff members as the district precinct results come in election night. Staff members will have a laptop computer at the courthouse and will update the website throughout the night.

## **MEDIA REQUESTS, GRANTS, WORKSHOPS, ETC**

- **Tidbits from Randall Travel Marketing:**
  - **Half of Travelers Read User Reviews Prior to Bookin:** Social media continues to grow in importance. In a recent study 48% of travelers read user reviews for hotels and lodging before booking their stay. Source: AOL/Zogby Travel Survey

- **Boomeropia.com:** Check out this website - a compendium of travel ideas and info geared to boomers...everything from travel with pets to great ideas for Grandparent/kid trips. Make sure YOUR destination is featured there!
- **Glamping** Heard of this yet? It is "Glamour Camping" much like high-end safari tenting. It may be a tent but with Persian rugs, fine linens and gourmet food service.
- For info on **STS Alumni program** go to [www.southeasttourism.org/newsletters/marketingcollege/marketing\\_college\\_0708\\_alumni.html](http://www.southeasttourism.org/newsletters/marketingcollege/marketing_college_0708_alumni.html)
- **Blue Ridge Country** is on FACEBOOK! Join and become a fan! Post your photos and stories, connect with other readers, receive news and updates about the magazine and the mountains. [www.facebook.com/pages/Blue-Ridge-Country/19087383530?ref=s](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Blue-Ridge-Country/19087383530?ref=s)
- **What do you get when you combine successful destination sales and marketing and award-winning travel writing?** You get two tourism professionals - Laurie Rowe and Kathy Witt – who can bring their senior-level expertise to destination marketing organizations and tourism venues, working with all budgets and often on a cost-per-project basis. **What can they do for you?**
  - Evaluate current sales, marketing and public relations programs and materials for positioning related to current market trends and customer goals
  - Brainstorm strategies for creative concepts and campaigns for press releases and press kits, feature story development and individualized PR campaigns
  - Write content for press kits, news releases, newsletters, itineraries, travel guides, brochures, websites, and other marketing materials
  - Develop travel themes and itineraries
  - Update existing marketing materials
  - Conduct workshops to increase community buy-in and to help create travel packages
  - Establish image library with an eye to what writers and editors need
  - Create not a one-size-fits-all but a tailor-made marketing plan to fit your individual needs
  - Arrange media trips partnering with the Georgia Turner Group, or arrange media visits on an individual basis

Contact Laurie at [laurierowe@bellsouth.net](mailto:laurierowe@bellsouth.net) and Kathy Witt at [wittk@fuse.net](mailto:wittk@fuse.net)

- **Media Requests:**
  - The annual Harvest fall leisure guide is scheduled to be published in the Aug. 31 editions of The Times. It will include stories on fall attractions in Northeast Georgia, plus a complete calendar of events and activities. Organizations wishing to submit information may send them by e-mail to [kalbertson@gainesvilletimes.com](mailto:kalbertson@gainesvilletimes.com). **The deadline for information to be included is Aug. 1.** If you'd like to submit story idea or photos, or if you have any other feedback that might help us, please feel free to drop me a line.
  - We are currently working on the Fall/Winter issue of Where Georgia magazine. Could you send me updated information on the major events that will be taking place at your attraction or in your town from Sept 2008-March 2009. I would appreciate any dates, times, admission prices, location, web site and description if possible so that our listings can be updated. Thank you so much for your help, and please let me know if you need any additional information.  
Jennifer Garrett, Assistant Editor  
Where Atlanta/ Where Georgia/ Where Guestbook  
180 Allen Rd. Ste. 200N, Atlanta, GA 30328  
(404) 845-2861 & [jennifer.garrett@morris.com](mailto:jennifer.garrett@morris.com)  
[www.wheretraveler.com](http://www.wheretraveler.com)
- **Articles (Call me for a copy):** None this month
- **AJC Online Blogs:**
  - The Table Talk column on Thursday featured restaurants that put Georgia on the map. The Table Talk column is an AJC blog, so readers submitted their favorite restaurants in Georgia. Blue Willow Inn, GA Mountain Restaurant in Hiawassee, Five and Ten in Athens, Barbara Jean's on St. Simons Island and so many more. Check out IF Not BBQ, then What at [www.accessatlanta.com/living/content/shared-blogs/ajc/tabletalk/entries/2008/07/03/if\\_not\\_bbq\\_then.html](http://www.accessatlanta.com/living/content/shared-blogs/ajc/tabletalk/entries/2008/07/03/if_not_bbq_then.html) by Meredith Ford.

- **Marketing/Advertising Opportunities:**

- Holidays in the Southeast Co-op Opportunity: 2nd Annual Holiday Getaways in the Southeast Co-op with **Better Homes and Gardens**, **Parents** and **Ladies' Home Journal**. Don't miss this great opportunity to promote your holiday event, festival or package and reach over 313,800 active travelers in the greater Atlanta area and all of Georgia. Last year Co-op participants received more than 47,000 leads combined from readers of **Better Homes and Gardens**, **Ladies' Home Journal** and **Parents**. With rates starting at \$3,550 for all 3 magazines. For more information, please contact Stacey Rosseter at (678) 507-0110 ext. 108 or [srosseter@navigate-media.com](mailto:srosseter@navigate-media.com).



- **Website Made Simple Workshop:** Anne Jenkins, artist and owner of The Point of Art Gallery & Studio in Union Point, Ga., will conduct a Website Made Simple Workshop on Saturday, August 9, 2008 at Athens Technical College, Athens Campus, 800 Hwy 29 North, Athens, GA 30601 ([www.athenstech.edu](http://www.athenstech.edu)), and sponsored by the Arts Development Council of Georgia ([www.adcg.org](http://www.adcg.org)). The full day workshop will run in 2 sessions from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon and continue from 1:00 p.m.- 3:00 p.m. Fee is \$10 for all ADCG members and \$20 for non-members. Contact Donna Butler, Vice-Chair of the Arts Development Council for registration at (706) 559-4841 or [storyteller826@bellsouth.net](mailto:storyteller826@bellsouth.net). Also, the Registration Forms can be found on the ADCG website, <http://www.adcg.org>
- If you are into cycling or promote Cycling to your visitors and would like to get the **BRAG (Bicycle Ride Across Georgia)** e-newsletter, contact [info@brag.org](mailto:info@brag.org).

## SAVE THE DATE

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

- August 6**      **ADCG General Membership/Open Meeting** at Wild Child Gallery and Madison Art Guild in Monroe, Georgia. For information, call Bill Ronay, Chair, [billronay@plantationcable.net](mailto:billronay@plantationcable.net),
- 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](mailto:ceidson@dca.state.ga.us)
- September 10-12**      **Georgia Governor's Conference on Tourism** Presented By GDEcD, GA CVB, And TDAG Albany, GA