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<p>www.ExploreGeorgia.org ~ www.GeorgiaMountains.org Tourism news/updates on Twitter.com: NEGATourism</p>	

NORTHEAST GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL TOURISM REPORT September 2009

TOURISM DIVISION UPDATE

- **Governor's Conference on Tourism at Lake Lanier Islands was excellent this year!** If you were not able to attend but would like info on the presentations, go to www.georgiagtc.com/presentations.html. Check them out and make plans to attend next year's conference in Athens!
It is important to celebrate best practices and leadership in Tourism. Congratulations to all of our award recipients for their well-deserved recognition at the tourism conference.

2009 GCT Award Recipients

- Paul Broun Award for Marketing Initiatives – **Georgia's Antebellum Trail Pilgrimage**
 - Larry Allen Award for Excellence in Tourism - **Lisa Smith, Rome Convention & Visitors Bureau**
 - The Award for Creative Expression – **Macon Convention & Visitors Bureau** – Macon Rocks! USB Guitar Flash Drive
 - Lifetime Achievement Award – **Bill Hardman, Jr., Southeast Tourism Society**
 - Tourism Champion/Private Industry – **Sean McGinnis, Emmis Publishing**
 - Tourism Champion/Partner Agency – **Georgia Department of Transportation** – "Discovery, Education, and Heritage Tourism of the Old Federal Road in Georgia"
 - Tourism Champion/Product Development – **Martin Harmon, Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation**
 - Tourism Champion/Legislative – **State Representative Larry O'Neal**
- **Deadline to submit bid for 2010 Travel Media Marketplace is September 10th.** Contact Stefanie Paupeck at spaueck@georgia.org if you need an extension on your bid submission.
 - **Tourism Product Development Grant:** The 2010 round grant applications are being accepted. The deadline for submission is October 02, 2009. All potential applications should not get lost in the details but think of hammer ready and shovel ready tourism projects that will add to your local job sustainability or job creation. The link for the application & guidelines follows:
www.georgia.org/Georgialndustries/Tourism/Programs/Pages/TourismGrantPrograms.aspx
 - **Save the Date for North Georgia's Agritourism Workshop:**
This year, there will be three Agritourism Workshops to serve the state in North Georgia, Central Georgia and South Georgia. You may sign up for the workshop nearest you, but for the most part South Georgia's workshop will best serve Magnolia Midlands. The dates and locations follow:
 - **North Georgia @ The Dillard House, Dillard, GA - November 5-6, 2009**
 - **Central Georgia @ Oakhurst Farm, West Point, GA - December 2-3, 2009**
 - **South Georgia @ Rainwater Conference Center, Valdosta, GA - November 16-17, 2009**

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend one of the Agritourism workshops

- **Fox Theatre Institute:** GDEcD and the Fox Theatre Institute have partnered up to promote the arts through increasing theatre programming and assistance in restoration of historic theatres throughout Georgia. There are several programs offered by FTI.
 - Georgia Applause is a collaborative effort with GDEcD and FTI aimed at both historic and non-historic theatres.

- Georgia Presenters offers block booking for better rates for any performing venue, thus getting good talent at a reduced or affordable rate.
- TAP (Theatre Advancement Program) assists historic theatre across the state.

For more information on the Fox Theatre Institute, visit www.foxtheatreinstitute.org.

- **CO-OP GRANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Co-Op Grants will be announced on or by October 15, 2009. Good luck to all Co-Op Grant applicants!
- Please check out your listing on www.ExploreGeorgia.org and contact me if you need assistance in updating your listing.
- www.ExploreGeorgia.org
 - Facebook: We are 80 people away from having 2000 fans on Facebook. www.facebook.com/ExploreGeorgia. If you haven't already become a fan, please do, and invite all of your friends to be fans too!
 - If you haven't noticed, check out:
 - Simple Reviews (located on all attractions and lodgings listings and also viewable on the search results page)
 - Kids Landing Page www.exploregeorgia.org/Kids
 - Music Landing Page www.exploregeorgia.org/Music
 - www.ExploreGeorgia.org has new feature highlighting all 9 Travel Regions
New Regional Pages will be developed for all of the State's nine travel regions (Historic Heartland was the first to be done and is complete) giving more in depth information and focus on the nine regions on the state tourism site. It will also provide an interactive experience for the consumer on the website. I will be working with Marty Williams on the Northeast Georgia Mountains Regional site. Note that this is NOT exclusive to the regional travel association, but will certainly be very helpful in promoting the organization. We will be needing high resolution photos for the regional section. **Events and content will be pulled from your partner pages as well so be sure to make your content the best it can be!** Contact me at 770-535-5757 with questions that you may have.
- **GROUP SALES:**
 - Atlanta will be hosting Travel South Showcase 2011: Go to the following link for the press release. www.travelsouthusa.org/showcase11/showcase2011pressrelease.pdf
 - Katie Baasen attended the **Alabama/South Central Motorcoach Operators Association** Annual Meeting and Marketplace August 2-5 in Mobile, AL. The Alabama Motorcoach Association and the South Central Motorcoach Assn (LA, MS, TX, AR) held their annual meetings together this year as a "relief" effort for supplier members. Tour operators from both state associations met with suppliers in an appointment marketplace as well as education sessions and networking activities.
 - Katie Baasen will be attending the **South Carolina Motorcoach Operators Association** Annual Meeting and Marketplace August 24-27 at the Gwinnett Place Marriott. We are happy to have this group come to Georgia! Katie will participate in networking activities, marketplace appointments as well as conducting the Associate seminar during the conference, Group Tour 101.
 - Katie Baasen will be attending **La Cumbre** with the Atlanta CVB September 9-11. Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2009, La Cumbre features 450 buyers and 250 exhibitors in the following categories: Leisure, Corporate and MICE in the Latin American market. La Cumbre delivers three consecutive days of networking functions, seminars, and structured business appointments. GDEcD will be participating with Jesus Garcia of the ACVB.
 - The Georgia Tourism division will again be participating as sponsors of the **National Tour Association (NTA)** Annual Marketplace and the **American Bus Association (ABA)** Annual Marketplace. This sponsorship provides us with a booth on the marketplace floor where we will maximize our exposure in this market. Georgia's theme for this year's marketplace is Civil War-Sesquicentennial Commemoration. We will distribute Georgia items, Sesquicentennial and Civil War itineraries, and giveaways commemorating Georgia's role in the war at the booth. Please contact Katie Baasen via email for more information or to participate, kbaasen@georgia.org.
 - Co-ops are available for state partners:
 - Kudzu Sponsorship - NTA: \$500 and ABA: \$350
 - Peach Sponsorship - NTA: \$750 and ABA: \$650
 - **Georgia Peach Greet** - GDEcD has started a new program for tour companies involving the state's 11 Visitor Information Centers. VICs are the perfect place for a pit stop for tour groups, the state's tourism division is encouraging the group leader to plan a stop with the group, so we can showcase our southern hospitality and say "Hey Y'all". All we need is 48 hours advance notice to prepare special Georgia favors.

The tourism division is offering it as an added amenity for a tour operator planning a tour to or through Georgia. This program is in conjunction with the Motorcoach Tracking the VIC staff is currently working on. Thank you to the VIC staff for their efforts on this program. Please contact Katie Baasen at kbaasen@georgia.org for more information.

GDEcD has launched an e-newsletter targeted towards tour operators. "**FYI from the Peach State**" will be sent quarterly to tour operators around the country. If you have any updates or special offers for the tour market and would like to have the information included in the e-newsletter, please contact Katie Baasen at kbaasen@georgia.org. The next newsletter is scheduled to go out in October.

- **Gas Card Sponsorship** - GDEcD is once again asking each Travel Association to participate in our Tour Operator giveaway program to take place at several of the Motorcoach Association Annual Meetings. We completed this program last year at the GA, AL, SC, NC, VA, MD, FL, and South Central Motorcoach Associations Annual Meetings with much success. The key message is "Your business is good business for Georgia". Please contact Katie Baasen at kbaasen@georgia.org for more information.

- **CONSUMER SALES:**

- **Southern Women's Show** - Birmingham, AL - September 24 - 27, 2009
The Southern Women's Show attracts more than 12,000 women over a 3-day period. These consumer shows target women with give-a-ways and tips on beauty, cooking, fashion, health & well-being, shopping, travel and much more! Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.
- **Louisville Travel Show** - Louisville, KY - September 26 - 27, 2009
The 2009 Louisville Travel, Adventure, Culinary Expo attracts more than 15,000 travelers! Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.
- **Southern Women's Show** - Orlando, FL - October 8 - 11, 2009
See above for show description. Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.
- **Georgia National Fair** - Perry, GA - October 8 - 18, 2009
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. Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.
- **Southeast ASTA Tradeshow** - Atlanta, GA - October 15, 2009
Last year more than 180 Travel Professionals participated in the Southeast ASTA Tradeshow in order to learn more about what destinations have to offer. Clients still want to take vacations but they may need to cut them shorter or explore closer to home. This is an opportunity to let Travel Agents and other Professionals in Georgia know what is in their own backyard! Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.
- **AARP Life@50+ Expo** - Las Vegas, NV - October 22 -24, 2009
They are expecting more than 25,000 members and others from all over the United States and abroad to attend the event. The AARP Vegas@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; a demographic comprising 26 percent of the U.S. population and a driving force in the market place. Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.
- **AAA Carolinas** - Charlotte, NC - November 21, 2009
AAA Superbowl of Knowledge is an annual gathering of AAA Carolinas Travel Counselors and staff to learn what new offers are available as well as new things to sell to their members. A lunchtime tradeshow allows Travel Counselors an opportunity to meet with the travel industry and gather information to take back to their offices and pass on to their membership. Consumer Sales Manager Pam Kruseck (pkruseck@georgia.org) will attend.

Show schedule subject to change

MISCELLANEOUS

- **Information on Organizations that you might find useful, informative and helpful...**
 - **ScenicGA Preserve and enhance Georgia's scenic values:** Scenic Georgia, Inc is a 501(c)3 organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing Georgia's natural and built scenic values. As an affiliate of Scenic America, we subscribe to the 7 principles of scenic conservation and to the proposition that while change is inevitable, ugliness is not. Georgia is a state of incredible scenic beauty. From the

coast to the mountains, it is unique and deserves protection. Without an enhanced 'scenic awareness' among citizens, politicians and policy decision makers, we will lose it. Join Scenic Georgia to preserve and enhance the place we call home. Go to www.scenicga.org for more details.

- **ARTICLES/NEWSLETTERS:**

- 6 social media platforms at a glance (Contact me for a copy)
- 10 practical tips for Facebook fan pages (Contact me for a copy)
- Cultural Heritage Newsletter: www.culturalheritagetourism.org
- **Survey Says!! U.S. Adults Intend To Travel:** The travel intentions of U.S. adults appear to be on the rise, according to the latest *travelhorizons*TM survey, the national survey co-authored quarterly by Ypartnership and U.S. Travel Association. Almost two-thirds (63 percent) of U.S. adults expect to take at least one trip for leisure purposes between August 2009 and January 2010, up from 61 percent who expressed the same intention in July 2008. Assuming Americans act on their stated intention, this will translate into an estimated 142 million U.S. adults taking at least one overnight trip during the next six months.

“Americans continued strong interest in travel and positive perceptions of its affordability are positive signs for the industry,” said Roger Dow, president and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association. “The cost of travel remains at historic lows, giving consumers phenomenal options and the opportunity to stretch their dollars farther.” Dow will present the keynote address at the Tennessee Governor’s Conference on Tourism, Friday, September 18 in Murfreesboro.

According to the national survey of 2,362 respondents conducted between 7/21-28/2009, the average number of overnight trips U.S. adults that intend to take during the next six months increased to 2.8 from 2.6 in July 2008. Travelers remained concerned about having sufficient money for travel. However, the majority of adults who are planning to take a trip are adjusting to reduced travel budgets, indicating they expect to spend less on travel services this year. They also intend to comparison shop for deals, especially online. **Only Half of Travelers Use Web to Get There** - Americans are traveling despite the economy, but only about half are using the Internet to research and make travel arrangements, according to a new study. About 117 million Americans – or about 52 percent of U.S. adults – have taken at least a two-day trip in the last two years. But only 47 percent of them used to Internet to research travel services. And 39 percent of recent travelers say online media actually influenced their choice of travel services, with hotel/bed and breakfast Web sites having the most influence. The data is per Ad-ology Research's study on media influence on consumer choice in travel services. The firm says online content also influenced 34 percent to visit local attractions and events, like amusement parks, zoos, and concerts. Traditional media influenced 27 percent of travelers and 32.7 percent of those visiting local attractions.

- To find out more, visit http://www.mediapost.com/publications/?fa=Articles.showArticle&art_aid=112840.
- **U.S. Travel Outlook Examines Current Industry Trends:** Signs of an economic recovery are beginning to appear, according to the most recent U.S. Travel Outlook. Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined by only one percent in the 2nd quarter, after four consecutive quarters of decline. Housing is beginning to level off, and “cash for clunkers” sales will reflect positively on the economy in the third quarter data. Even with these small glimmers of hope, however, economists warn that recovery will be long and difficult. Consumer spending remains stagnant, with cost-cutting being noted across all demographic groups. Consumer confidence also showed conflicting results in August.

Lodging performance continued to decline. According to Smith Travel Research (STR), who are now updating their forecasts monthly rather than quarterly, even though 2010 will improve slightly, there will still likely be decreases in all major indicators through year-end 2010.

Business travel continues to languish, with declines in the meetings sector showing the greatest declines. Though these declines affect some destinations more than others, many experts believe that the “AIG Effect” has permanently changed the meetings business and that there may now be much more emphasis on the return on investment for meetings. Meetings, events and performance incentive travel in the United States are currently responsible for almost 15 percent of all domestic travel.

On a positive note, consumers are expressing a renewed desire to travel, as leisure travel continues to outperform business travel. According to the U.S. Travel Association’s July TravelHorizons survey, almost two-thirds of U.S. adults plan to take at least one leisure trip in the next six months. The average number of trips also increased. Though many destinations are seeing record declines, other destinations appear to be benefitting from incentives and attracting in-state and neighboring state travelers. Visits to [national parks](#) were up 4.5 percent through July (NC national park visits were up about 2 percent through July).

For more information from the September edition of the U.S. Travel Outlook, visit www.ustravel.org/resources/Outlook/09/June.htm.

- **New Study on African American Travel:** A ground-breaking study to gain more insights about African American travelers is being planned. The study will segment the market, identify African American travelers' interests, and measure propensity to visit destinations that reflect and preserve African American heritage. Sponsors can submit proprietary questions. The study is being conducted by the U.S. Cultural & Heritage Tourism Marketing Council and Mandala Research. For more information contact laura@MandalaResearch.com
- **Online Museum Survival Guide Available:** The **American Association of Museum's** online **Museum Survival Guide** (www.aam-us.org/survivalguide.cfm) includes links to resources on the impact of the recession, fundraising, practical tips, management advice and information about downsizing and retrenchment. In addition, the Vice President of the **National Trust for Historic Preservation's Historic Sites Department** offers **strategies for reducing expenses or increasing revenues** (<http://historicsites.wordpress.com/2009/03/30/site-directors-meeting-recap/>) on the National Trust's Historic Sites blog.
- **Hotels Giving Children the VIP Treatment:** Occupancy is down at hotels across the country, and business travel in particular has taken a beating, but hotels are finding a new group of customers to cater to: children. According to D.K. Shifflet & Associates, a travel and tourism research company, the percentage of hotel rooms with children has been slowly but steadily increasing nationwide, from 25 percent in 2006 to 27 percent in 2008. And some local hotels have been rolling out the red carpet to attract these young guests, putting magicians in the lobby on Saturday mornings and stocking child-size bathrobes and slippers. Gone are the days when hotel extras were limited to adult-oriented features such as whirlpool bathtubs and froufrou cocktail lounges. To find out more, visit http://www.boston.com/business/articles/2009/08/24/hotels_roll_out_red_carpet_for_new_clientele_children/.
- **Companies Using Social Media to Screen Potential Employees:** The number of companies using social networking Web sites to screen potential employees has doubled in the last year, and what they have found has killed the hire for more than a third of candidates, according to a CareerBuilder report. Its survey of more than 2,600 hiring managers found that 45 percent are searching sites to research job candidates, up from 22 percent a year ago. Another 11 percent say they plan to start using social networking sites for screening. The report says 35 percent of employers decided not to hire someone because of what they found out about them on these sites. Use of social networking sites can also increase odds of getting hired, with employers citing a good feel for the candidate's personality, a profile that supports their qualifications and a candidate who showed creativity as reasons for deciding to hire someone based on their online postings. To find out more, visit http://triad.bizjournals.com/triad/stories/2009/08/17/daily34.html?ed=2009-08-19&ana=e_du_pub.
- **MEDIA INFO/REQUESTS/ADVERTISING:**
 - **Blue Ridge Country Magazine:** Our September/October issue is back from the printer and will be in mailboxes soon. If you'd like a preview of the cover, visit our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/BlueRidgeCountry
 - **Blue Ridge Country Seeking Civil War-Related Events** - Blue Ridge Country magazine is seeking all types of events through 2009 and into 2010. They're also specifically seeking Civil War-related events throughout this timeframe. Event information may be sent - and Civil War events sent separately -- to Editor Cara Ellen Modisett at cmodisett@leisurepublishing.com.
 - **Heritage and Cultural Travel Web site** -- Gozaic.com is an online community that provides a travel planning resource for heritage and cultural travelers and features heritage destinations, sites and events. Gozaic - done by Heritage Travel, Inc., a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation - is seeking heritage and cultural destinations and sites who are interested in being listed on the Web site, which also offers a chance for people to find and share heritage- and culture-rich experiences. Destination partners benefit from extensive consumer marketing as well as a professional forum for networking and sharing best practices about heritage tourism development. The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, Chowan County TDA and Old Salem are just a few examples of participating partners. To view Gozaic, visit <http://www.gozaic.com/tom/>. To find out more about participating, contact Heritage Travel at (202) 588-6200 or visit www.HeritageTravelinc.com.
- **GRANTS & AWARDS**
 - **Land Conservation Workshop**

If you own land with important natural or historic resources, donating a voluntary conservation easement can be one of the smartest ways to conserve the land you love, while maintaining your private property

rights and possibly realizing significant tax benefits. Wednesday, September 16, 2009 | 9:00a.m. - 11:00a.m. Historic Court House | 100 North Street | Canton, Georgia

Join us for this free workshop to learn more.

- How do I conserve my land?
- What are the benefits of conserving my land?
- How can I maintain the value of my land for my family while conserving my property?
- How can I learn more about the conservation process?

Call today to reserve your space. Contact Patricia Muesse at 706.253.4077 or email patricia@mctga.org
For more information, visit <http://www.mctga.org/Events.htm>

○ **Preservation Services Fund Grants**

Administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, these grants are awarded to nonprofit organizations and public agencies for preservation planning and education efforts. Grant awards range from \$500 to \$5,000. For more information, contact the Southern Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation at 843-722-8552 or soro@nthp.org and the National Trust website at www.nationaltrust.org/help/grants.html. The application deadline is **October 1**.

○ **National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs grants**

The National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs funds public projects at museums, libraries, historic sites, and other historical and cultural organizations. The grants support historic site interpretation, exhibits, reading or film discussion series, symposia, and digital projects. For more information contact the Division of Public Programs, 202-606-8269 or www.neh.gov. The application deadline for funds from America's Historical and Cultural Organizations and Interpreting America's Historic Places programs is **January 13, 2010**.

• **JOB OPENINGS:**

- The Kingsland Convention and Visitors Bureau is now accepting applications for the [position of Sales Manager](#). The CVB is seeking a dynamic team member who is able to multitask, be a consensus builder and also has a strong background in tourism/hotel sales. This staff position is primarily responsible for planning, directing, managing and executing the sales function for the KCVB. Primary duties include promoting the Kingsland area as an overnight visitor destination to the tour and travel market through tradeshow participation, marketplace representation, direct sales, networking events, prospecting, direct mail/e-communication campaigns, etc. Qualifications include: Bachelors degree in related field or equivalent combination of education and experience in hotel sales, meetings, group and/or hospitality sales preferred. Must possess a valid Georgia driver's license. Position regularly requires over night travel and performance of duties outside of normal business hours. Excellent writing, communication and problem solving skills required. Starting salary is \$24,767.18 annually plus full benefit package. A full description of the position, including a job description, is available online at the [City of Kingsland website](#). Applications are now being accepted
All applications must be submitted to Human Resources, P.O. Box 250, Kingsland, GA 31548. Position is open until filled. For more information or a complete job description contact Human Resources at (912) 729-5613. [The City of Kingsland](#) is a Drug Free Work Place and Equal Opportunity Employer
- **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DALTON AREA CVB:** The Executive Director will direct convention and tourism sales and marketing, as well as sports marketing for Greater Dalton, and will manage CVB operations for this small city nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in NW Georgia. The community's population is approximately 100,000. Dalton is located 80 miles north of Atlanta & 25 miles south of Chattanooga. The preferred candidate will have managerial experience, written/verbal communications, budgeting & problem-solving skills, experience w/ boards, government entities, funders, etc. Preferred candidate will have a BA or BS and a minimum of 4 years experience in hospitality and/or tourism marketing. CVB experience highly preferred. The Executive Director will supervise 2 F/T & 4 P/T staff, as well as volunteers with a budget in the range of \$350,000 to \$400,000. NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE! APPLY ONLINE AT: <http://www.cityofdaltonga.gov/images/stories/HR/cvbappl.pdf>

DATES TO REMEMBER

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.)

STS Top 20 Events Nominations:

To be considered, an event must have an attendance of at least 1,000 and be in its third year of existence. There is a \$10.00 entry fee required per event. Top 20 Events strongly encourages entrants to support nominations by providing supporting material such as photos, posters, brochures, press releases, news clippings and/or volunteer programs. To find out more, visit www.southeasttourism.org/top20/.

- October 9** **STS Top 20 Events Nomination Deadline for April, May & June 2010.** For nomination forms and more info, go to http://southeasttourism.org/top_20_events.html.
- January 8, '10** **STS Top 20 Events Nomination Deadline for July, August, & September 2010.** For nomination forms and more info, go to http://southeasttourism.org/top_20_events.html.
- April 9, '10** **STS Top 20 Events Nomination Deadline for October, November, & December.** For nomination forms and more info, go to http://southeasttourism.org/top_20_events.html.
- July 16, '10** **STS Top 20 Events Nomination Deadline for January, February & March 2011.** For nomination forms and more info, go to http://southeasttourism.org/top_20_events.html.