



Georgia Dept of Economic Development
Northeast Georgia Mountains Travel Region
February 2008 Report

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

GEORGIA TOURISM DIVISION NEWS/ACTIVITIES

- **GEORGIA DREAM PASS SPECIAL OFFER: FREE FOR THE FIRST YEAR!**

The first 100 attractions that sign up as Basic or Premier partner in the Georgia Dream Pass affinity program will have their partner fees waived for the first year with a two year commitment. All Georgia attractions are eligible to become a Dream Pass partner and receive this special offer. All current Dream Pass partners will also have their partner fee waived.

The Georgia Dream Pass is a free-to-consumer "membership rewards" program designed as a value-added program to help enhance the consumer's experience as they visit Georgia. The goal is to get the consumer to stay the extra night, buy the extra ticket, play the extra round and spend the additional dollar.

For more information, contact the Dream Pass sales team at dreampass@georgia.org or visit www.gadreampass.com.

- **New Consumer Tourism Website:** A soft launch is now on-line with a hard launch scheduled for April 2008. Check it out at www.exploregeorgia.org. Please keep in mind this is just the tip of the iceberg and there is much more to come. If you have suggestions for additional "experiences," please send them to Cheryl Smith (csmith@georgia.org).
- **Travel Media Marketplace:** Each county has the opportunity to showcase their area by submitting 50 copies (no holes punched) of their Profile Sheet to Stefanie Paupeck, GDEcD, 75 Fifth Street, NW, Suite 1200, Atlanta, GA 30308. **DEADLINE: March 7th.**
- **Creative Economies Initiative:** You can read all the notes from the Town Hall meeting at this site: www.georgia.org/Town+Hall+Meeting+Notes.htm. Let me know if you'd like a copy of the timeline for the creative economies initiative. Now that the town hall meetings are complete, the next step is a web registry that is scheduled to roll out between now and the end of March. Following that will be development of curriculum, then creative economies business to business seminars, etc. Our department is moving along the timeline as scheduled so far, and I think you can look forward to more information to come this spring and summer as this moves forward.

Check out http://youtube.com/watch?v=YtpT_KsOxlo.

- **The 2007 Year in Review** will be posted on www.MarketGeorgia.org under Industry Research. It has some interesting research information, as well as recapping of some of the division's accomplishments in 2007.
- **GDEcD Tourism Division announces 2008 Tourism Product Development Grants.** Deadline for Applications are due May 1st, 2008. 2008 Priority funding area – Georgia's Creative Economies with emphasis on Cultural and Heritage Tourism products. Maximum Award is \$10,000 and it is a full match. Contact me for more information.
- **Techno Tourism Conference** – For more info and registration form, go to www.areg.caes.uga.edu.

- **Co-Op Program:** This is a gentle reminder that **FY 2007-2008 Co-Op Reimbursement Marketing Grant Program Final Reports** are due 30 days after the end of your program or by May 30, 2008 (the 31st is a Saturday), whichever comes first. I've attached a copy of the Final Report information.

Please remember to include:

1. A cover page with the "Legal Name of Entity" as it appears on the application. Please include a contact person, phone number and e-mail.
 2. A budget page corresponding to the application budget page showing/comparing your actual budget.
 3. Sample pages of the advertising with date and name of magazine (adding cover page is fine). Please do not put ads on a CD. DO NOT include the entire magazine unless that is what you produced with the funds. Highlight your ad on a page of multiples. PDF's of the ads are not valid.
 4. Actual brochure or picture of banner hanging with location identified. Again PDF's are not valid.
 5. Print out the page from your website if that is what funds were used for.
 6. Official invoices (not the printer's quotes) highlighting specific costs.
- Detail exactly how the Co-Op funds were expended. Explains any deviations from the application.
- Dara Barwick, Regional Small Business & Innovation, GDEcD is seeking **places** (other than places like Lane Packing, Carroll Farms, etc) **that have built a brand around the Georgia peach, peach products, peach history.** Other than gift shops that carry peach products. If you have a suggestions, please email her at dbarwick@georgia.org (and please copy me). THANKS!

NE GA MTNS TOURISM INDUSTRY NEWS

- **North Georgia Mountains Foodways Alliance...** If you are interested in the group and what they are doing, visit www.georgiafoodways.org.
- Mary Boland, **Rabun County CVB** has set up a blog to post news about things happening in Rabun County. Here it is if you'd like to check it out: www.visitrabun.org/blog
- **Help for ARTISTS:** The Georgia Heritage Center for the Arts is working on ways to help all of their artists to get the best information onto the Web site. There are many artists who do not get e-mails or have not yet heard about the Artists Brochure and Web site. If you know of any would you please print this message and have them get in touch with the GHCA. Artists who do not have professional photographs of their art; Richard Smith will be at the Center to take up to 5 photos of your art and one with you with your work for a total of 6 photographs. They will be put on a CD so that you can then have them reproduced as well as sending them to the www.GeorgiaArtists.org web site. He will be at the Center April 6th and 13th from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. It will take 30 minutes per artist so you must call and sign up for your time slot. Richard is only charging \$25.00 for this service. Call 706-754-5989 or e-mail ghca2@alltel.net. Next we will also set up a computer on those two days to help you enter your information onto the web site if you need help.
- Congratulations to our GA State Parks in Northeast Georgia. Each year, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recognizes outstanding state parks and historic sites for their customer service, programming, maintenance and other achievements. Most of this year's awards were presented during the January Managers Conference and the February Rangers Conference, both held at Unicoi State Park in Helen. Employees were recognized for accomplishments as serious as fighting wildfires and as unusual as hosting bug-eating programs.
 - OUTSTANDING PARK OPERATION -- **Amicalola Falls State Park, Dawsonville**
 - Manager Bill Tanner and his staff operate the most visited state park in Georgia, offering excellent customer service while running a mountaintop lodge with limited staffing. Ranger programs involving owls, hawks and snakes are always popular with visitors.
 - CUSTOMER SERVICE (MANAGER) – **Jerry Brown, Lodge Manager, Unicoi State Park, Helen** While managing a 100-room hotel within a popular state park, Jerry Brown maintains one of the most upbeat attitudes within the park system. His customer service skills are outstanding and infectious.

- **CUSTOMER SERVICE (RANGER) -- Robin Glass, Interpretive Ranger, Dahlonega Gold Museum Historic Site, Dahlonega** Last year, nearly every comment card received at Dahlonega Gold Museum included Robin Glass' name in a complimentary manner. He is exceptionally skilled at making history come alive for visitors of all ages.
- **BEST YEAR-ROUND PARK PROGRAMMING – Fort Yargo State Park, Winder**
- Variety, volume, partnerships and commitment are characteristics of this year's winner. Manager Eric Bentley and his staff work with recreational groups to host numerous bike races, triathlons and other events. They offer programs to school groups, scouts and civic clubs.
- **Carl House** Owner, BB Webb, is delighted to announce that at Carl House she not only recently purchased a beautiful old, square grand piano for her ballroom, but that it will be played regularly by Carl House's new Artist in Residence, Lee Davis. Lee will be the regular featured pianist at many Carl House public functions and may be available to play at your special event. For more information on how you can purchase Lee's beautiful solo piano music or how you might engage him for your next event
- The Georgia Wine Country Festival is requesting vendors and sponsors for this year's festival to be held Saturday June 7 and Sunday June 8, 2008 at Three Sisters Vineyards & Winery near Dahlonega, Georgia. The annual outdoor wine-art-music festival is now in it's 7th year and continues to be a high profile and successful lifestyle event that attracts thousands of people to North Georgia the first weekend of June.

Attendees are treated to samples of Georgia Grown wine produced by several statewide wineries and international wine will also be presented. Folk art, horse drawn vineyard wagon rides and live folk, bluegrass and contemporary music will be presented around the vineyard and winery. A silent auction will be conducted for the Georgia charity is SEBA –The Southeastern Bluegrass Association. SEBA is a non-profit organization of fans, musicians, promoters, vendors, and friends of BLUEGRASS music, joined together to preserve, promote, and publicize the music and BLUEGRASS activities

The Georgia Wine Country Festival is an ideal place to showcase a regional or local hospitality business, service or attraction in a relaxed environment. Artists that paint, draw, create pottery, paint or produce original folk art items are encouraged to participate and sign up to display art as a special artist vendor. Festival hours are from 11:30-5:30 and daily admission is \$20.00 per adult (21 or older) and includes a keepsake wine glass. Food and beverages may be purchased from vendors inside the festival. Three Sisters Vineyards & Winery is located just 40 minutes from the affluent North Atlanta-Alpharetta-Cumming area. A full list of vendor information is available at www.ThreeSistersVineyards.com or by contacting Doug Paul at 706-865-9463.

MEDIA REQUESTS, GRANTS, WORKSHOPS, ETC

- **Google:**
 - Do you track your website visitors? If not, check out **Google Analytics** at www.google.com/analytics/home/provision.
 - Get your tourism attraction, lodging or recreational business listed on Google Maps for free: Make sure to put in key words. Go to www.google.com/accounts/ServiceLogin?continue=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2Flocal%2Fadd%2FbusinessCenter%3Fgl%3Dus%26hl%3Den-US&service=lbc&hl=en-US&gl=US
- **Fred Shaw does theatre reviews for "Smoke Signals On Line"**. Although the paper is issued for Big Canoe, (a community in North Georgia) it is available to anyone with a computer. Our website is www.bigcanoenews.com I will review any artistic event but prefer those which run for several weeks or are a series. I am particularly interested in the North Georgia area but this would include Atlanta and its suburbs. My e-mail address is derfwahs@hotmail.com and my telephone number is 706-268-3585.

- **New travel Web site for boomers: Boomeropia** (Associated Press Published on: 02/26/08) LOUISVILLE, Ky. — A new travel Web site has been launched for baby boomers at www.boomeropia.com. "I happen to be a baby boomer and I felt like the fun side of me wasn't being catered to and marketed to," said Web site founder Liz Dahl, 59, in a phone interview from her office in Louisville. "I was getting ads for medication and hearing aids and no one was appealing to my fun side." So she created Boomeropia as an information site, listing interesting trips and tours in 30 categories, from adventure to pet travel to beaches and bed-and-breakfasts. Other categories include cruises, culinary travel, golf, fishing, and "glamping" - which means "glamorous" camping or camping trips where the tour operator does all the hard work for you, with comfortable tents and catered meals. Click on "botanical tours" and you'll read about a trip to Kazakhstan in search of alpine plants; click on "volunteer" for details on an American Hiking Society trip to work in a park in the Chilean Patagonia. There is also a forum section where readers can post photos and share their thoughts.

- **EasyMap** State Park & Trail maps. The **EasyMap** is a self-retractable park and trail map that rolls up into a weather resistant case. They can be attached to a jacket, keychain, or backpack, and allow for easy reading of a park map, even while walking. **EasyMaps** are compact and feature high resolution printing. In addition to be sold in gift shops and admission windows, they have plenty of room for logos and other messages and are a great way to bring in sponsor revenue. You can display them at the admission window for a quick high margin sale. Or, use them in conjunction with park related promotions or events. The **EasyMap** is custom printed with your park map(s) or other information (logos, distances, hours, etc), and can be customized with logos or sponsor information. . For complete product information, please see our brochures:
 Front: www.ActionSportsInteractive.com/EasyMap.Park.BrochureFront.pdf .
 Back: www.ActionSportsInteractive.com/EasyMap.Park.BrochureBack.pdf .
 Contact Info: Caroline Wold, ActionSports Interactive, cwold@ActionSportsInteractive.com
 404.459.2747 office - 404.387.1744 mobile - 270.626-0265 fax

- The **Southern Arts Federation** is looking for a pre-existing exhibit to add to the Southern Visions: The Southern Arts & Culture Traveling Exhibits roster! For submission requirements and the Exhibit Submission Form, go to www.southarts.org/site/c.guYLaMRJxE/b.3931887/ . Applications must be postmarked by May 1, 2008. For more information, please contact **Teresa Hollingsworth** at (404) 874-7244 x. 14.

- Barbara Schneider is the editor of **Smoke Signals Online** and can be reached at bschneider@bigcanoenews.com. She is interested in information about places to visit and things to do in Georgia. They are constantly looking for photographs and interesting locations to highlight. They've done a bit with the Georgia wine highway but would like more. And, with spring on the way, would love to promote festivals and interesting places for summer vacations. She would appreciate Word files without a lot of formatting--just a simple word file. And as many jpg files as you can send. www.bigcanoenews.com

- **Info from Office of Historic Preservation:**
 - Southeast Chapter Society of Architectural Historians (SESAH) is seeking nominations for the 2008 Publication Awards. The three categories are books, journal articles, and essays published in book format. The copyright should be no earlier than 2006. The awards are for publications either on the topic of architecture in the South, or by authors who reside in the South (defined as SESAH member states). Deadline is 5/1/2008. www.sesah.org/sesah/Awards.html
 - SESAH seeks nominations for the Best of the South: Preserving Southern Architecture Award. This annual award honors a project that preserves or restores an historic building, or complex of buildings, in an outstanding manner and that demonstrates excellence in research, technique, and documentation. Projects in the twelve-state region of SESAH that were completed in 2006 or 2007 are eligible. Deadline is 6/30/2008. www.sesah.org/sesah/Awards.html
 - The Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce announces the EDA Excellence in Economic Development Awards 2008 to recognize exemplary economic development accomplishments in your communities. EDA is also pleased to announce the new nomination category of Excellence in Historic Preservation-led Strategies to Enhance Economic Development. Deadline: 4/16/2008 - www.eda.gov/PDF/EDAawardsbrochure2008.pdf.

- **Tidbits from Randall Travel Marketing:**
 - 64% of Baby Boomers feel younger than their actual age, saying they feel an average of 11 years younger, according to Mature Market.
 - According to the National Restaurant Association food trends identified by chefs include:
 - **Hot:** bite-size desserts (83%); locally grown produce (81%); organic produce (75%); small plates/tapas (73%); specialty sandwiches (71%); craft/artisan/microbrew beer (70%); sustainable seafood (65%); grass-fed items (65%); energy drink cocktails (64%).
 - **Passe:** fruit flavored wine (63%); star fruit (62%); kosher wine (59%); tofu (59%); vermouth (55%); mezcal (55%); chai (50%)
 - The U.S. issued 18.4 million passports in 2007. A 52% increase over 2006. (Source: U.S. Dept. of State).

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.)

- April 14-15** **TechnoTourism Conference – Athens, GA – Classic Center** Go to www.marketgeorgia.org. Click on Industry Events and go to April
- April 21-27** **Tour de Georgia** ~ Go to www.tourdegeorgia.com to find out the news...Lt Governor Casey Cagle will serve as Chairman of the event.
- May 1-3** **Travel Media Marketplace (TMM) will be in Augusta.** The RFP for TMM bids for 2009 and 2010 will go out soon. Thanks to all the communities that sent in Profile Sheets.