



REGIONAL TOURISM REPRESENTATIVE REPORT March 2009

GEORGIA TOURISM DIVISION UPDATE

REGIONAL TOURISM REP PROGRAM

- **Current & Previous Monthly Reports:** You can read previous reports by going to www.marketgeorgia.org and clicking on Monthly Regional Reports and clicking on Northeast Georgia Mountains.
- **Atlanta ACVB requested itineraries for Come Early, Stay Late program geared toward meeting planners.** I sent them about 7 that I had from folks in the region. If you have any 1-2 day itineraries that you would like to share, I'll keep them in my files for future requests such as this.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM

- **Press Releases:**
 - **Spring into beautiful weather at Georgia's festivals** Sent out 2/11/09
 - **State launches explore Georgia photo contest** Sent out 2/19/09
 - **Come See What's Cookin' in Georgia Rich** Sent out 2/20/09
- **PeachBytes** (Georgia Tourism Industry Newsletter): A monthly update to Georgia's tourism industry. To view past newsletters or to sign up, go to <http://web.georgia.org/core/item/page.aspx?s=244185.0.26.3011>
- **Media Leads:**
 - Travel writer Kay Harwell Fernandez has created a new web site about chocolate and travel. She focuses on chocolate festivals, museums, factory tours, spas, specialty boutiques and other chocolate-themed travel around the globe. She also mentions the destination to give readers a sense of place. A longtime journalist, Kay has written about travel for a decade. Her features have appeared in international, national and regional magazines, newspapers and webzines. She has also contributed to a National Geographic tabletop book. She is a member of Society of American Travel Writers, American Society of Journalists & Authors, International Food, Wine & Travel Writers Association and Florida Freelance Writers Association. Her web site can be viewed at www.chocolate-travel.com. Contact: Kay Harwell Fernandez Kay@chocolate-travel.com
 - **Small Market Meetings**, a monthly national newspaper, seeks meetings-related news from second-tier and smaller cities for their April issue. Send information on new or renovated hotels, convention facilities, new marketing programs aimed at meetings, transportation improvements or other destination updates that correspond to the publication's request. **The deadline for information is March 10th.** Please respond directly to Vickie Mitchell at vmitchell@smallmarketmeetings.com.

GEORGIA VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER & REGIONAL VIC PROGRAMS

- GTG Delivery info for RVICS: Penny Smith will email order forms the middle of March giving the RVICs a week to get them back to her. She'll send the order to the warehouse by the end of March. The RVICs should have their shipment the first or second week in April.
- Tiffany Marlin recently sent out the RVIC renewal application documents. She included the renewal application, a copy of the criteria, a training verification sheet, a visitation log for 2008, and a visitation log for 2009. If you are interested In any of this, you can also find PDF versions of these documents on www.marketgeorgia.org.

Current RVICs were asked to return the application, a signed copy of the criteria, their training verification sheet/sheets, and their 2008 visitation log to her by April 15th by either email, mail, or fax. Please contact Tiffany if you have any questions attmarlin@georgia.org.

SALES & MARKETING PROGRAM

- **Group Travel Leader Leads** – I've sent these out to folks on my Group Leads list. If you would like a copy, just let me know.

TOURISM FOUNDATION & RESEARCH

- **Grant Programs**
 - **Co-Op Advertising Grant:** Given the fact that it looks like the legislative session is going to be split into 2 pieces, with next year's budget not decided until the end of June, we are going to delay the co-op deadline until 7/31/09. That way if the money doesn't come through in the budget, we won't have asked the partners to put proposals together needlessly. Let me know if you have any questions.
- **Techno Tourism Conference** – registration is online
- The tourism newspaper from **Tourism Day at the Capitol** is now posted on market Georgia under Research

PUBLICATIONS & WEBSITES PROGRAM

- www.GAMadeGAGrownProducts.org – Make sure you submit a listing, if you meet the criteria, for this website. It is part of GDEcD's Creative Economies Initiative. Contact me if you have questions or need help.
- A new search category "by travel region" has been added to the GMGG website. It is really good for communities looking to locate registrants from their region – please pass this good news to reps and encourage them to encourage CVBs and art councils to "spy" on their arts centric businesses!
- 2009 Georgia Travel Guide is available for distribution. For a copy, go to www.ExploreGeorgia.org and order one, call 1-800 VISIT Georgia, go to a State VIC or go to a Regional VIC. You might even find them at your local Chamber of Commerce or CVB.

MEDIA REQUESTS, GRANTS, WORKSHOPS, ETC

GRANTS & AWARDS

- The Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce, announces the EDA Excellence in Economic Development Awards 2009 to recognize exemplary economic development accomplishments in communities. The nomination category of Excellence in Historic Preservation-led Strategies to Enhance Economic Development is noteworthy. Nominations submitted in this category demonstrate significant use of regional historic assets (including heritage tourism) to advance innovative economic development strategies resulting in higher-skill, higher-wage jobs and substantial private capital investment. The deadline for entry submissions is April 16, 2009. For more information visit www.eda.gov or contact Barbara Earman at 202-482-4521.
- The second round of grants for historic cemetery preservation/programming is open. You can check out the www.MarketGeorgia.org website under the grants page or DNR's website. Those of you who have a historic cemetery in your community might be interested in applying.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

INDUSTRY TRENDS/NEWS

- **Artists Are Part of the Workforce Too**

The nearly two million U. S. artists comprise "...one of the largest classes of workers in the nation... artists earn an aggregate income of approximately \$70 billion annually." "Artists now play a huge but mostly unrecognized role in the new American economy of the 21st century," said NEA Chairman Dana Gioia. The Artists In The Workforce Study "provides the first look at 21st century labor trends among working artists" and shows how important American artists are to both our nation's cultural vitality and

economic prosperity of our communities." Access the report at www.arts.endow.gov/news/news08/ArtistsinWorkforce.html.

- Let me know if you'd like the latest **America's Byway Bulletin** and I'll email it to you.
- **Job opening:** Sales Manager position available. Interviews beginning next week. Email resumes to or contact by phone: **Amy G. Haley, Senior Sales Manager, Hampton Inn & Suites Savannah Historic District 912-721-1603 – Direct 912-508-9814 – Cell 912-721-1600 – Hotel Direct 206-339-5412 – Direct Fax amy.haley@hilton.com** 201 MLK Jr. Blvd Savannah, GA 31401 www.savannahhistoricsuites.hamptoninn.com

MARKETING & ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

- Hylah Smalley (hylahsmalley@mac.com) with Blue Ridge Country Magazine wanted to share the following:
 - A. **Travel Trends** for 2009:
 - 61% will travel in 2009 up to 5 hours for a weekend getaway, 25% would go further
 - Length of Stay will be 2/3 days instead of 5/6 days, however some OVERNIGHT travel will increase due to the fact that once they are there they want to relax for awhile.
 - 68% say affordability is the most important thing in selecting a destination
 - 2009 will bring 4.7 trips per year for the average traveler

People can come to the mountains very reasonably - hiking, nature, some fairs and festivals are all FREE. By placing your message in *Blue Ridge Country* assures you are reaching the people for whom the mountains are a desirable/comfortable travel option. Stressing affordability, safety, weather, relaxing location and scenic beauty will position you to capitalize on the most important points in choosing a destination in 2009.

- B. January **Survey Results** about *Blue Ridge Country* readers:
 - 58% are paid subscribers
 - 65% have read 5 or 6 issues
 - 87% read BRC for pleasure
 - 70% love to read about Outdoor Travel
 - 57% are between the ages of 45-64; 20% are above and below this age bracket
 - 51.2%/48.8% are Male/Female
 - 81% are married
 - 30.3% are retired

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.)

March

Month long celebration along the Southern Literary Trail

Georgia authors will be featured on the Southern Literary Trail, a historic linking of Southern communities, towns and landmarks, for a monthlong festival honoring some of the South's greatest authors, scheduled for March 2009. With stops along 18 Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi towns between Savannah, GA and Natchez, MS, events will take place at various libraries, museums and courthouses throughout the month. Trail towns will present tours, plays, films, reading and discussion panels celebrating Southern literature and its hometown authors, with special emphasis on the settings that influenced their works. For information on event times and locations, visit www.southernliterarytrail.org.

March 1 & 2

Winter Chautauqua 2009, Dalton, GA – For more info and to register, go to www.WinterChautauqua.org

March 9- 11

GACVB Winter Meeting, Jekyll Island Club

Register online at www.regonline.com/gacvbwinter09. This meeting will include the course requirements for *Supervising Excellence*, the first tier of GACVB's new Leadership

Excellence Certification (LEC) program certified by the Cunningham Center for Leadership Development at Columbus State University. Designed for CEOs and Senior Staff of Georgia DMOs, the meeting agenda includes sessions on the Foundations of Leadership, Effective Communication, Supervising/Empowering, and Priority Setting/Time Management. A commitment to the three year certification process is not required to attend the Winter Meeting.

- March 27** **"GEORGIA ON MY MIND DAY" at the Columbus VIC from 11am-3pm.** The Georgia Visitor Center in Columbus will host our annual event in spring 2009. We're looking forward to an earlier date to encourage plans for spring break, weekend getaways and summer vacations! SAVE THE DATE! Plan to attend then let us know for media coverage. Please remember to bring your own tent, table, tablecloth and chairs. Thanks for attending previous GOMM days and we're looking forward to another great GOMM day in early 2009! Georgia Visitor Center, I-185 and Exit 12, 1751 Williams Rd. Columbus, GA 31904. Rita, Peggy & Karen Phone 706-649-7455 rhughes@georgia.org Columbus@georgia.org
- April 3** **Georgia On My Mind Day at the Valdosta VIC from 10am until 2pm.** (Or Stay As Long As You Like!). This is a great opportunity to showcase your Georgia attraction, hotel or event. We will not be able to provide tents this year so if you have a tent you may want to bring it. All vendors will be set up outside. You will need to provide your own table for this event. If you plan to attend Georgia On My Mind Day, please Contact: Cathy Sasnett at the Georgia Visitors Center, Lake Park: Phone: 229-559-5828. Email: Csasnett@Georgia.org.
- April 9-30** **Appalachia: A History of Mountains and People**
It will be broadcasted on PBS once a week (Thursdays) for four weeks.
- April 5-8** **S.A.T.W. Central States Fam** – Northeast Georgia Mountains Region
- April 10** **STS Top 20 Events Nomination Deadline for October, November & December 2009.** For nomination forms and more info, go to http://southeasttourism.org/top_20_events.html.
- April 20-21** **The 2009 Techno Tourism Conference** will take place at the Classic Center in Athens. The conference will focus on social networking tools, campaigns and demonstrations showcasing applications on a PC. More information will be available soon.
- May** **Group Travel Boot Camp** in Macon (Details on www.MarketGeorgia.org)
- May 22** **Georgia On My Mind Days at the Lavonia VIC from 8:30am to 5:30pm.** This is a great opportunity to showcase you Georgia attraction, Hotel or Event. You will need to provide your own table and no selling is allowed. If you can join us please contact: Shirley Crawford Georgia Visitors Information Center Phone: (706) 356-4019 Email: scrawford@georgia.org
- June 6-13** **BRAG (Bicycle Ride Across Georgia) 2009 Early Bird Registration Open** – Route goes through Northeast Georgia from Hiawassee to Clarks Hill Lake. Go to www.brag.org for info and updates
- July 10** **STS Top 20 Events Nomination Deadline for January, February & March 2010.** For nomination forms and more info, go to http://southeasttourism.org/top_20_events.html.
- July 26-31** **STS Marketing College** will take place **Sunday, July 26 through Friday, July 31, 2009** in **Dahlonega**. It will be another intensive, fact-filled week of learning, networking and socializing at North Georgia College and State University. For more information, visit www.southeasttourism.org.

Aug 31–Sept 2 Georgia Governor’s Conference on Tourism, Lake Lanier Islands Resort

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.

Respectfully submitted by

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