



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

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GEORGIA TOURISM DIVISION NEWS/ACTIVITIES

- **ACTION:** Partner Admin Now Live for www.ExploreGeorgia.org – You can access it at www.ExploreGeorgia.org/partneradmin (**save this as a Favorite**). Note: Your username will now be your email address and your password is the same as it was on Georgia.org. There are still a few bugs to work out, so if you encounter any problems, please send an email to the link provided on the site. **DO NOT** enter tourism listings on www.Georgia.org. The listings currently on that site will only remain there until late 2008. Contact me for directions or assistance in updating your listing.
- **ACTION: Registration for the Governor's Tourism Conference is live today!** Please check out www.regonline.com/govtourismconf. All conference registration, lodging info, schedule & sponsorship information can be found here! Remember, the early registration (\$300) is available through Friday, June 13th, after that regular registration is \$350. Make your plans today!
- **ACTION: Techno Tourism E-Challenge Grant application deadline is July 31, 2008.** This grant is only available to those who attended the Techno Tourism conference in April.
- **Regional Rep Program:** Mandy McCullough has been hired as the new Historic Heartland tourism representative. Mandy has a long hotel background in sales and management. She has been working in the Heartland region for five years with both Cuscowilla Resort and The Lodge on Lake Oconee.
- **Co-Op Advertising Program:** Our department e-mail server has been out since Sunday (6/15) and I have not been able to send notification that the announcement for the FY 2008-2009 Co-Op Marketing Reimbursement Grant qualifiers is **postponed until June 30th**. I am sending this e-mail through the internet web access (I had to input each address by hand). We received over 100 applications this year. Accounting procedures, coordination with this year and last year's Final Reports plus another grants program are involved in our calculations, and all management have got to sign off on each. Our Senior Staff have been out of town at meetings and our Board has not been apprised. All of this goes into our decisions before making an announcement. I know everyone is waiting but this is unavoidable. Thanks for your understanding. Leslie
- **Contact me if you would like the Excel files indicating states of origin of people traveling through the Georgia Visitor Centers in the spring of 2008.**

NE GA MTNS TOURISM INDUSTRY NEWS

- **What's New in Northeast Georgia:**
 - **ADA Trail** in Dawsonville
 - **LaPrade's Marina – Lakeside Grill and Water's Edge Restaurant** in Clarkesville
 - **Hilton Garden Inn** in Gainesville
 - **Land of Spirit Folk Life Play** in Lavonia
 - **Best Western Lanier Center is now Holiday Inn Lanier Center** in Gainesville
 - **Long Mountain Lodge** in Dahlonega
 - **Love it Antiques**, 121 Hodges Street, Cornelia, 30531 GA 706-778-8316
 - **Funopolis Family Fun Center**, 40155 Hwy 441, Commerce, GA 30539 706-335-3866
 - **Rhapsody Grill and the Spotlight Piano Bar** in Dahlonega

- The **Humble Candle** introduces their very own line of signature products! Wonderful soy candles are poured in vintage glass. Don't miss the fizzing "Bubble Biscuit" to make your bath luxurious!
- **Kryder Gallery** www.krydergallery.com
- **Artist Marketplace** ~ located on Enota Street in front to the Olde Cannery Art Center and Old Jail just two blocks off the Square. The Artist Marketplace features works of art by local and regional artist. The Marketplace is the perfect place to find a unique gift for you, your home or that special someone's special event! The Artist Marketplace will be held the first Saturday of every month through November from 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. In the event of inclement weather, the Marketplace will be held inside the Olde Cannery Art Gallery. The Artist Marketplace is sponsored by the Dahlonga Arts Council and the Dahlonga-Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce. For more information or artists wishing to participate, call Dennis Hoover at 706-867-8134
- **A sad farewell, a hearty good luck and genuine welcome to...**
 - Michael Crump has taken the Main Street Manager's position in Hartwell. Patricia Fritz retired.
 - Dale Rice-Waters has left the Towns County Chamber
 - Cindy Smith is no longer with the Franklin County Chamber
 - Julie Leneave, the Main Street Manager in Elberton has left
 - Bobby and Barry Aycock have sold Glen Ella Springs – we will miss you so much!
- **Welcome:**
 - Ed & Luci Kivett are the new owners of Glen Ella Springs. We wish you well and welcome to Northeast Georgia! ☺
- The York House in Rabun Gap is for sale.
- **Go to www.gpb.org/georgiatraveler/206 to view the episode on Scenic Mountain Highways...** U.S. 76 and 19, Georgia 180 and 75. David gets away to the Smithgall Woods Conservation Area near Helen and Keely hikes a portion of the Appalachian Trail. Our tallest talent meets Georgia's tallest point when Phil visits the legendary Brasstown Bald. Keely finds down home food at Mary Ann's Country Kitchen in Young Harris and the trio has family fun at the Georgia Mountain Fair in Hiawassee. Georgia Traveler's "Scenic Mountain Highways" episode aired Friday, July 11 at 9 PM, Saturday, July 12 at 7 PM and will air Wednesday, July 23 at 7:30 PM. For more information, visit www.gpb.org/georgiatraveler/206. Georgia Traveler is produced in partnership with the Georgia Department of Economic Development and the Georgia Tourism Foundation. Georgia Public Broadcasting is Television, Radio and Education: your PBS station serving all of Georgia; your source for great music and NPR news; and Georgia's source for top-quality multiple media educational products and services. Watch Georgia Public Broadcasting on these nine stations across Georgia: Atlanta - Channel 8; Albany - WABW/14, Augusta - WCES/20, Chatsworth - WNGH/18, Columbus - WJSP/28, Dawson - WACS/25, Macon - WMUM/29, Savannah - WVAN/9, Waycross - WXGA/8.
- **One-tank trip to Chateau Elan Winery worth toasting Tours, fine dining, concerts, cooking demos among the attractions** Atlanta Journal-Constitution Published on: 06/20/08
www.ajc.com/travel/content/travel/southeast/ga_stories/2008/06/20/CHATEAU_ELAN_WINERY_ONE_TANK_TRIP.html

MEDIA REQUESTS, GRANTS, WORKSHOPS, ETC

- Jane Speake with **Southern Distinction Magazine** has asked that we spread the word about their Special Events section. She is interested in December 2008, January 2009 and February 2009 events. Please ask our tourism partners to send event information directly to Jane at southerndistinction@gmail.com and jane@southerndistinction.com and be sure to put Calendar or Upcoming Events in the subject line. Please include event name, location, date, time, cost, website, public contact information and a brief description.
- **Articles & News Clips:**
 - Eating only what grows around you. Once the purview of foodies and hippies, 'locavorism' is going mainstream www.msnbc.msn.com/id/24994028/
 - **Staycations** The following article is available on AJC.com in the Social Butterfly section. "Staycation" appears to be a new travel term that is popping up in the media lately. Interesting concept! They also listed this in the blogs section, so people may respond with other options for "staycations" in Georgia. www.ajc.com/living/content/shared-blogs/ajc/social/index.html
 - Flexibility, choice, authentic experiences and the ability to customize a trip are what people want most in tours and vacation packages, according to a member survey conducted by the U.S. Tour Operators Association. Value for the dollar, enhanced service and new destinations were other elements cited by USTOA members, who send 11 million travelers on vacation yearly. Let's look at what that means.
Contact me for full article.

- **Where do you go for a taste of our region's history?** The following is available on the AJC homepage and under blogs. They are asking people to submit their favorite historical sites. The writer includes Westville and Agrirama below. So far, people have commented on the State Fair in Tifton, Warm Springs and the Little White House, Dahlonga, Sweetwater Creek State Park, Jonesboro, Oakland Cemetery and many others. www.ajc.com/blogs/content/shared-blogs/ajc/travel/entries/2008/06/11/where_do_you_go.html
- **Tidbits from Randall Travel Marketing:**
 - **Where We Go:** 37% of Americans have traveled to fewer than 10 states in their lifetime. Most have visited Florida (62%), California (56%) and New York (51%). *Source: Greyhound*
 - The number of Wi-Fi hot spots in the U.S. - such as hotels, airports and cafes - jumped 56% in 2007 to nearly 67,000. *Source: JiWire*
 - **Quality & Price & Green:** Shoppers are more likely to consider quality (66%) and price (58%) than environmental concerns such as where a product is made (44%) or its energy efficiency (41%). *Source: BBMG Consumer Consciousness Report*
 - *Consumers Changing Habits in Economic Downturn ~ According to BIGresearch:*
 - 62% Eating out less often
 - 57% Driving less on daily basis
 - 47% Going to fewer movies & plays*Source: World Tourism Organization (WTO)*
- **Media Requests:**
- **Articles (Call me for a copy):**
 - Top 10 travel innovations of the past 10 years by Budget Travel
- **Are you GREEN?** In this day and age, people are making decisions on where to stay and where to eat based on how environmentally friendly that hotel/motel or restaurant is.
 - **What makes a hotel "Green"?** Hoteliers reach millions of people every day and are extremely well-positioned to educate the world's population on ways to protect our environment, according to Patricia Griffin, president of the Green Hotels Association, an award-winning organization that has helped thousands of lodging properties save money and our eco-system at the same time. The association (www.greenhotels.com) brings together hotels interested in environmental issues, its 350 members each receive a 148+ page booklet packed with ideas and guidelines revealing how to reduce their own bills while helping to save the planet. Here are just a few of the ideas:
 - Recycling cardboard saves the most money because its bulk no longer fills the dumpster
 - Compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs) convert more than 70 percent of the energy used to light and less than 30 percent to heat.
 - By replacing four incandescent bulbs with two wall-mounted CFL fixtures in each bathroom, hotels can reduce their energy costs by \$14.30 per bathroom each year.
 - Cards asking guests to reuse linens can cut laundry, utility and staff costs by as much as 50%.
 - **What makes a restaurant "Green"?** The Green Restaurant Association (GRA) is a national non-profit organization that provides environmental consulting as well as many other benefits. Restaurants can become Certified Green Restaurants when they join the organization and complete the following:
 - Sign contract and commit to the GRA's Environmental Guidelines
 - Replace all polystyrene foam products
 - Recycle all products accepted by local waste collection companies\
 - Implement one Environmental Step after signing the contract
 - Commit to completing four Environmental Steps per year of membership
 - For further information, visit www.dinegreen.com
- **TOP STORIES & TRENDS: NEW SURVEY REPORTS TRAVEL GROWTH DESPITE SLOW ECONOMY**
Published on: June 13, 2008
 In spite of rising fuel costs, fluctuating exchange rates, airline route consolidations and a global credit crunch, Americans and international consumers are still setting aside valuable time and money to make travel plans within the United States. In fact, nearly one in four U.S. travelers agree that a vacation is their birthright according to the Y

Partnership/Yankelovich National Leisure Travel Monitor, supporting global data recently compiled from wholesale travel distribution company Tourico Holidays, Inc.

Tourico said its bookings offer evidence to support optimism for the American travel industry, citing a 10 percent increase in domestic trips reserved by U.S. consumers for this year's second quarter compared to the same time last year, and a 58 percent increase in U.S. reservations made by travelers from abroad. The majority of these bookings were surprisingly made during the first quarter of 2008, when rumors of a global recession first began to circulate, and reveal a 27 percent increase from the same period in 2007. The top domestic destinations that American consumers will visit during the second quarter of 2008 remain consistent with years past, including locales in Florida, Nevada, New York, and California. When booking internationally, U.S. travelers will check-in most often to Mexico, Canada, the United Kingdom, France and Spain. The majority of international visitors entering the U.S. from abroad in the coming months originate from the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Brazil, and China, having booked their trips most often to hotels in New York City, followed by Miami, Las Vegas, Orlando, and Los Angeles. For more information, visit www.ypartnership.com or www.TouricoHolidays.com.

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- **Commissioner Mike Beatty of the Department of Community Affairs has announced several changes among top staffers at the agency.**
 - Assistant Commissioner Jim Finch will be promoted to deputy commissioner - external affairs, where he will continue to lead the local government assistance division and head up efforts to transition Regional Development Centers to Regional Commissions. Finch will also be responsible for coordinating DCA's state legislative activities.
 - Deputy Commissioner Phil Foil will become deputy commissioner - internal affairs, responsible for organizational development, customer service, strategic planning and internal operations. He will continue to serve as the department's congressional affairs liaison.
 - Senior advisor Bill Swaim will fill the new position of chief of staff, where he will manage the agency's communications, policy, scheduling, board support functions and state legislative relations.

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.)

July 31 Deadline for E-Challenge Grant Application

September 9 Hotel Tax Seminar, Toccoa, GA

September 10-12 Georgia Governor's Conference On Tourism Presented By GDEcD, GA CVB, And TDAG Albany, GA

Upcoming GA On My Mind Days:

- July 18, 2008 Augusta Visitor Center email augusta@georgia.org for more info