




NORTHEAST GEORGIA MOUNTAINS TRAVEL REGION

November 2011 Report

Cheryl Smith
Regional Tourism Representative
GA Dept of Economic Development
Office: 770-535-5757 ~ Cell: 678-640-4355
csmith@georgia.org

GEORGIA TOURISM DIVISION NEWS & UPDATE

- The email distribution list for the monthly Georgia Tourism e-newsletter is 48,585
- **Visitor Information Center Fam will be November 28-December 1, 2012** – Thanks to the following communities who will be hosting the staff from the Georgia Visitor Information Centers (Hall County, Helen, Blairsville, Young Harris, Hiwassee and Rabun County). This is a great opportunity to show what Northeast Georgia has to offer visitors.
- **The IZO Holiday Campaign has begun.** IZO the Snowman will be traveling around Georgia promoting holiday events and encouraging folks to go visit attractions, events, etc. during the holiday. Go to www.Facebook.com/ExploreGeorgia and www.twitter.com/ExploreGeorgia. IZO will be visiting seven sites in Northeast Georgia.
- **Travel Media Marketplace 2012** is scheduled to take place in May. Bid forms have been sent out and all bids are due back to GDEcD by December 16th.
- **The Tourism Division of GDEcD has officially switched the Twitter feed over to www.twitter.com/exploregeorgia.** We are excited to have the same name associated with our Facebook and Twitter pages. Everything else will stay the same! www.twitter.com/georgiatourism no longer exists.
- **[Georgia On My Mind \(GOMM\) merchandise is now available](#)** to both tourism partners and consumers for the first time via our new online store on ExploreGeorgia.org. Go to ExploreGeorgia.org and click on 'Shop for Georgia Items!' on the right rail of the homepage to check out our wearable merchandise including beach towels, bags, blankets and more. All merchandise is available with an embroidered GOMM logo (black, white, full color and tone-on-tone). There are no minimum quantities when ordering, and a discount is available when ordering quantities of 24 or more items. Another option is for Georgia tourism-entities to order co-branded merchandise with their logo on the merchandise as well.
- Latest Smith data for October 2012
 - October
 - Hotel/motel **occupancy** increased 0.1% statewide in October 2011 from October 2010
 - October 2011 **room rates (ADR)** in Georgia were down slightly -0.9%
 - Statewide, **RevPAR** was down -0.8%.
 - Georgia **room revenues** decreased -1.3% in October 2011
 - **Room Demand** decreased -0.4% in the state from October 2010
 - **Room Supply** was down 0.5%
 - YTD
 - Hotel/motel **occupancy** is up 4% statewide YTD (through October) 2011
 - YTD **room rates (ADR)** in Georgia are up 0.7%
 - Statewide, **RevPAR** is up 4.7% year-to-date.
 - Georgia **room revenues** are up 4.6% year-to date.
 - **Room Demand** is up 3.8% in the state year-to-date.
 - **Room Supply** is down -0.1% in the state year-to-date.

 **Georgia Department of Economic Development and Georgia Council for the Arts Grants** - One grant was awarded in Northeast Georgia. Congratulations to the Sautee Nacoochee Center.

 **GDEcD SALES TEAM UPDATE**





- Kevin Langston and Joseph Walker participated in the **Travel South Italy Mission** that included the TTG Rimini Travel Show, Tour Operator trainings in Milan, and a presentation of the Southern states at an event in Rome. Georgia Tourism met with more than 30 tour operators while in Italy. Statistics show that Italian travel to Georgia is up 20 percent.
- Nija Torrence attended the **Ontario Motorcoach Association Conference (OMCA)** and marketplace from November 6 to 9 in Windsor, Canada. The [OMCA Marketplace](#) is the premier event in Canada for North American packaged travel. Buyers and sellers meet face to face during the pre-scheduled appointments.
- Jonathan Boisjolie attended **World Travel Market** from November 7 to 10 in London, England. Staged annually in London, [World Travel Market](#), the leading global event for the travel industry, is a vibrant, must attend, four-day business-to-business event presenting a diverse range of destinations and industry sectors to UK and International travel professionals. It is a unique opportunity for the whole global travel trade to meet, network, negotiate and conduct business. By attending World Travel Market, participants efficiently, effectively and productively gain immediate competitive advantage for their business and stay abreast with the latest developments in the travel industry.
- **Pam Kruseck attended the AAA Carolinas Superbowl of Knowledge November 18 - 19, 2011 in Greensboro, NC.** 'Superbowl of Knowledge' is an annual gathering of AAA Carolinas Travel Counselors and staff to learn about new offers and tourism products for their members. AAA Carolinas is expecting 300 employees including Travel Counselors and Drive Vacation Specialists. A lunchtime tradeshow allows Travel Counselors an opportunity to meet with us and gather information.
- The sales team is participating in a **Travel South Sales Mission** to Orlando, Florida to meet with key receptive operators from November 29 to December 4. These receptive operators provide U.S. and Georgia travel products to international tour operators around the world.
- Georgia Tourism attended the **AARP Life@50+ Expo** from September 22 to 24, 2011 in Los Angeles, California, and collected 996 leads. The leads were sent to the Regional Tourism Reps on October 3. Total attendance at the Expo was 17,651. The 2012 Life@50+ Expo will be held in New Orleans September 20 - 22, 2012.
- Georgia Tourism will once again be participating a sponsor for the **National Tour Association (NTA)** Annual Convention (December 5 to 9, 2011) and the **American Bus Association (ABA)** Annual Marketplace (January 6 to 10, 2012). As part of our sponsorships we will have a booth on the marketplace floor that will allow maximum exposure to all attendees and provide us a better opportunity to sell Georgia. We are changing our level of participation this year for ABA and will be the show bag sponsor - as such we will offer co-sponsorship to our partners. Pam Kruseck and Nija Torrence will be attending. Co-sponsorship information for both NTA and ABA was sent out to the Regional Reps on August 16, 2011 - for additional co-sponsorship information, please contact Pam Kruseck via email at pkruseck@georgia.org.
- Georgia Tourism hosted a booth at the **Georgia National Fair** in Perry from October 6 to 16, 2011. The state-sponsored fair celebrates youth, agriculture and heritage. The annual Georgia National Fair has been designated as a "Top 50 Fair in North America" by Amusement Business magazine.
- Georgia Tourism participated in the **Rejuvenate Marketplace** in San Jose, California from November 7 to 9, 2011. Rejuvenate Marketplace is an educational conference designed specifically for meeting planners who organize meetings and conferences for faith-based organizations. The three-day event includes a reverse trade show with one-on-one appointments between planners and suppliers; an all-day planner boot camp for both novices and professional planners; several general sessions; and two days of sessions covering basic planning topics, business skills and strategy, technology tools and social media, and program innovations. Pam Kruseck will attend. Co-op information was sent to the Regional Tourism Reps on August 26. For additional co-sponsorship information, please contact Pam Kruseck via email at pkruseck@georgia.org.
- Georgia Tourism will attend the Tennessee Motorcoach Operators Association Annual Convention from January 22 to 26, 2012 in Lexington, Kentucky. The Annual Meeting will include appointment sessions with

members of each Association, educational seminars and networking opportunities. For additional co-op information, please contact Pam Kruseck via email at pkruseck@georgia.org.



Travel & Tourism Day 2012

- New partners for 2012: Georgia Department of Economic Development Tourism Division, Georgia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, Georgia Chamber of Commerce Tourism & Entertainment Committee, the Georgia Hotel and Lodging Association and the Georgia Restaurant Association.
- Main event will be held on Tuesday, January 24 in conjunction with Georgia Music and Arts Day.
- Each region is asked to participate at the \$500 level as in years past. No commitment from individual partners unless you purchase lunch.
- Free advocacy 101 session will be offered on Monday prior to the main event.
- Features: Profile sheet for each region and county with 2010 impact numbers; hand fans with state impact; photo with governor on steps of capital.
- Potential issue for 2012: Definition of tourist in the state tax code.
- By defining "tourist," our industry ensures the reliability of hotel / motel tax to destination marketing organizations in the future.


REGIONAL NEWS

-  **Tourism Job Openings:** www.southeasttourism.org/IndustryJobs.cfm
-  **Debbie Gagliolo due to health reasons has resigned from the Alpine Helen-White County CVB.** Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers. She has been one a great tourism partner over the years.
-  **2012 Winter Chautauqua** - March 4-5, 2012 in Gainesville, Georgia. Theme will be "Camera Ready" and focus on the film industry. More details to come soon.
-  **GA Traveler** - GA Traveler recently aired stories on Helen and Lake Lanier Islands.

PUBLIC RELATIONS, MARKETING, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND OTHER INFO

-  **Preservation Primer: A Resource Guide for Georgia** - Georgia's State Historic Preservation Office announces new publication. The Primer focuses on historic preservation strategies to identify, evaluate and protect historic properties and brings together information from various sources into one guiding document. HPD Director Dr. Dave Crass said, "We want to empower communities to make their own decisions about their local historic buildings and sites. This manual is one more tool preservationists can use to spur economic development while retaining those characteristics that make their neighborhoods unique." In addition, the Primer highlights specific preservation projects and resource types from all over Georgia. Information for the Primer was compiled by HPD staff, with contributions from preservationists across the state, and various local, regional and state organizations. The Primer can be found on the Community Assistance page of the Historic Preservation Division's website at <http://georgiashpo.org/community>.
-  The Georgia Agritourism Association (GAA) one of the state's newest associations organized to meet the needs of the growing agritourism industry. Plan to join them for the 2012 Georgia Agritourism Conference on Jan 5-6, in Savannah. This year's conference will be held in conjunction with the SE Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference, and promises to be an exceptional event. New this year -- A GAA silent auction! They are collecting items for the auction, and welcome all gifts, large and small! Please consider contributing something -- perhaps a season pass, a gift basket, 10 lbs of worm casings, admission to a corn maze, a bottle of wine, lodging, books, food, gift certificates, classes etc. Be creative. They think that it will be a lot of fun to "know you" by gifts representing your venue and/or a passion of yours to share with others. The Georgia Agritourism Association is a 501 (c) (6) entity; your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. For more information about the conference or the silent auction please contact: Sarah Cook at smcook@uga.edu or call 229-391-6882.

GRANTS & FUNDING SOURCES

-  **In search of funding for cultural heritage tourism?** Click [here](#) for a blog that includes targeted list of federal grant opportunities for preservation and cultural heritage tourism projects culled from the comprehensive database of [federal grants](#). The National Trust for Historic Preservation's federal grants office maintains this blog

which also includes a calendar of upcoming deadlines and useful tips to help you navigate through the federal grant application process. For more ideas check out the [funding section](#) of this website.

- 🍌 Administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, **Preservation Services Fund 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 at 843-722-8552 or soro@nthp.org or visit the [National Trust website](#). Application deadlines are **February 1, June 1** and **October 1** each year.
- 🍌 **List of Grants & Other Funding Sources** - Information on grant programs and other funding sources - www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Tourism/Programs/Pages/Grants.aspx
- 🍌 **Funding initiatives through Georgia State Parks** - The following is a URL for two programs (the "Land and Water Conservation Fund" and the "Recreational Trails Program"). The Coastal region has utilized these grants for tourism related projects: www.gastateparks.org/net/content/page.aspx?s=8084.0.1.5&siteid=5&wrapid=1
- 🍌 **List of Funding Sources for Historic Preservation Projects (Georgia Historic Preservation Division)**
This is a long and extensive list...be sure to check it out periodically for new funding opportunities.
http://georgiashpo.org/sites/uploads/hpd/pdf/Funding_Sources_for_HP_2010.pdf

SAVE THE DATE!

- 🍌 December 14 – **NE GA Mtns RTA Meeting** – Lanier Charter Career Academy (Oakwood) – Go to www.GeorgiaMountain.org to register
- 🍌 January 6 ,2012 - **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in July, August, September 2012
- 🍌 January 24, 2012 – Travel & Tourism Day at the Capitol – Atlanta, GA
- 🍌 April 6, 2012 – **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in October/November/December
- 🍌 July 6, 2012 – **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in January/February/March
- 🍌 August 27-29 – Governor’s Conference on Tourism - Atlanta, GA
- 🍌 October 5, 2012 – **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in April/May/June
- 🍌 January 4, 2013 – **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in July/August/September
- 🍌 April 5, 2013 - **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in October/November/December

Tourism Industry Calendar – For a listing of tourism industry events such as conferences, trade shows, etc., go to www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Tourism/Pages/IndustryCalendar.aspx. Contact me at csmith@georgia.org if you would like an industry event posted.