



**Georgia Dept of Economic Development
Northeast Georgia Mountains Travel Region
May 2008 Report**

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ACTION: Ballots are now open for the 2008 Southern Living Readers Choice Awards. People can go to the magazine's Web site, register and then vote for their favorite city, small town, family destination, weekend getaway, hotel, beach, festival/fair, scenic view, and public garden, plus preferred restaurants for breakfast/brunch, splurging and southern favorites. Deadline for entries is **July 21**. Results will be published in the January 2009 issue of Southern Living. To register & vote, visit www.timeinc.net/southern/secure/sweeps/readerschoice08/entry.html?iid=readerschoice|ballot|2008.

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.
- **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.
- **Note from Kevin Langston, Assistant Deputy of Tourism:** Please join me in congratulating Becky Basset on her retirement this week after many years of service to our Department and to Georgia's tourism industry. Becky's unflappable demeanor, calm confidence, depth of knowledge and consummate professionalism has led to her being recognized as one of Georgia's tourism champions. As the leader of our tourism regional representatives team, Becky has been one of the key people behind the scenes making sure that our Travel Guide is as complete and effective as it can be, that our website is up-to-date and focused on the right areas, that travel writers and tour operators who visit us experience the best our great state has to offer, that a myriad other publications come off well and, perhaps most important of all, that her team of professionals across the state know how much they are appreciated and have the tools and knowledge they need to do their jobs well. We'll miss Becky sorely, but wish her well in the next stage of her life.

I am also pleased to announce that we were able to find an excellent candidate from the regional rep team to replace Becky. Please congratulate Fay Tripp on her promotion from regional representative for the Historic Heartland to director of the team. Fay brings a wealth of experience from both the public and private sectors to her new challenge. I am looking forward to working with her and know you will be too.

- **Note from Bruce Green, Director of Product Development:** Please join me in welcoming on board our new Tourism Product Development Project Managers.
 - **Pooja Kumarhia** comes to Tourism from the Global Commerce Division where she has served as a statewide project manager since May 2006. She also previously worked in our International Trade Division. From rural communities to the metro Pooja has worked with a wide spectrum of communities, resources and projects. She brings excellent skills in project initiation, management and execution to our Tourism team.

- o Mary Stansfield will be transferring within Tourism from the Georgia Music Hall of Fame where she has served as the Manager of Visitor Services since 2006. She was responsible for managing the museum operations for admissions, retail and rentals and developed and executed marketing plans targeted to group travelers. Prior to working with the Department she worked with Habitat for Humanity and the Coca Cola Company where she held a number of management positions. Mary has a broad background of working at all levels including Board level to achieve solutions to business issues. She brings a successful record of implementing new processes domestically and internationally including developing markets.

Working from our headquarters Pooja will be located in the office formerly occupied by Bruce Green and Mary will retain an office at the GMHF and have a presence at our Atlanta office. Both will be involved in developing new tourism product in all of Georgia's nine travel regions by working with local governments, communities, clients and other stakeholders on tourism development projects while encouraging private sector and community leadership to partner on creating jobs and investments in Georgia. In an effort to better serve our communities, **Pooja will be focused on North Georgia and Mary will be focused on South Georgia.** Our new team members will begin transitioning on June 1st.

- o **Tourism Product Development Grant application deadline was June 2, 2008.** Info and application is available online at www.MarketGeorgia.org or contact tourism rep.

NE GA MTNS TOURISM INDUSTRY NEWS

- **Northeast Georgia Mountains Travel Association Meeting Schedule is usually held the 2nd Wednesday** of each month at 12 Noon.. Dates and meeting locations vary so please check www.georgiamountains.org for the most up to date meeting information. Contact Jane Sims at jsims@helenga.org to RSVP. Non-members welcomed to visit!
- **Interactive Neighborhood for Kids (I.N.K.)** announces the opening of their **newest exhibit, "Building a Healthy Body"** Contact 770-536-1900 or visit www.inkfun.org. The Medical Center Foundation "Building a Healthy Body" exhibit was made possible by the proceeds from The 2006 Medical Center Open Golf Tournament.
- Make plans to take a trip down a river, canoe and kayaking is great on the Broad River as well as on the Etowah and the Chestatee Rivers. Wildflowers are certainly in full bloom with Mountain Laurel being the most prolific and there's water in the river.
- Check out Downtown Toccoa and Doyle Street, which has recently reopened after an extensive streetscape.
- Good Luck and Good Bye to Pat Fritz, Hartwell Main Street Manager who retired recently.
- Goodbye to Julie Leneave, Manager of the Elberton Main Street program. We will miss your hard work and geocaching expertise!
- **New lakeside tiki hut opened Memorial Day Weekend Lake Lanier Islands resort:** Want to feel like you're on vacation without gas prices breaking your wallet? Escape to the Islands and kick back a little at the new Tiki Hut at Lake Lanier Islands Resort just 45 minutes from downtown Atlanta. Located on the water's edge, this casual, open-air eatery and watering hole is the perfect place to chill out, soak up some rays and enjoy the beautiful views of Lake Lanier.

Grab a hamburger, hotdog or some chicken tenders and leave the grilling to us, or just relax, sip on a refreshing Tiki libation and watch the boats go by. Opening Friday, May 23, 2008, come and enjoy this new lakeside Tiki Hut at Lake Lanier Islands Resort Tuesday through Sunday 12:00pm until sunset. The new Tiki Hut is located near the Harbor Landing Boat Rentals and gas dock (to the left of the old Pinelsle Resort boat docks) and near the Lake Lanier Islands Beach and WaterPark.

Most people that have been on the lake a while remember the old days of the Pinelsle Tiki Hut that gave boaters a place to relax with friends and family after a long day on the lake. The new Tiki Hut at Lake Lanier Islands Resort will provide similar atmosphere and will be adding more entertainment and menu options throughout the summer as the demand grows. Stop by and let them know what you think and what you'd like to see more of at the new Tiki Hut.

Boaters are welcome and encouraged to dock in our free dock spaces located directly in front of the Tiki Hut. The new Tiki Hut will be open on Monday, May 26, 2008, for Memorial Day from 12:00pm until sunset.

GPS Coordinates are: 34 10' 43 North ~ 84 01' 43 West (between markers 10-12)

For general information call 770.932.7200 or visit www.lakelanierislands.com. For media information, please call 678.318.2087, or email Katy McLaughlin at kmclaughlin@llimail.com.

- 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. For more information on show topics, visit our website: www.gpb.org/georgiatraveler.

MEDIA REQUESTS, GRANTS, WORKSHOPS, ETC

- 2008 Southern Living Readers Choice Awards** ~ Ballots are now open for the 2008 Southern Living Readers Choice Awards. People can go to the magazine's Web site, register and then vote for their favorite city, small town, family destination, weekend getaway, hotel, beach, festival/fair, scenic view, and public garden, plus preferred restaurants for breakfast/brunch, splurging and southern favorites. **Deadline for entries is July 21.** Results will be published in the January 2009 issue of Southern Living. To register and vote, visit www.timeinc.net/southern/secure/sweeps/readerschoice08/entry.html?iid=readerschoice|ballot|2008.
- GA Dept of Community Affairs to hold Hotel Tax Seminars (June 5 and Sep 9)**
 Details found at www.mainstreetgeorgia.org/UserFiles/File/Hotel%20Motel%20Tax%20Seminar%20Flyer.pdf
Questions? Cindy Eidson, (404) 679-3101, ceidson@dca.state.ga.us
- HPD has partnered with the Georgia Department of Economic Development to offer a new, one-time grant program for historic cemeteries.** The purpose of the grant program is to assist local communities in promoting their historic cemeteries through heritage tourism. Eligible projects include research and documentation; interpretation and public information; advertising and marketing; or workshops and training. "Bricks and mortar" projects are not eligible for this program. The reimbursable grant funds are 50% state/50% local match and will be awarded on a competitive basis. The maximum grant award will be \$2,500; however, there is no minimum amount, and HPD encourages applications for small projects. Information and grant applications will be posted on HPD's Web site at <http://hpd.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaynavigation.asp?TopCategory=36> by May 21. You may contact Carole Moore, grants coordinator, at 404-463-8434 or carole.moore@dnr.state.ga.us to receive a paper application in the mail. The application post-mark deadline is August 15, 2008. Grant awards will be announced by September 30, 2008.
- Tidbits from Randall Travel Marketing:**
 - Texting teens**~More teens prefer to text or instant message each other than use e-mail, a study shows.
 - Phone 59%
 - Instant Message 26%
 - Text Messaging 7%
 - E-mail 5%
 - In Person 2%
 - Other 1%
 - Recent study found that kids between the ages of 8 and 18 spend more than 44 hours per week plugged into computers, cell phones, music and TV, often simultaneously. Kids' brains are on overdrive, compressing 60 hours of information into only 44.
 - Average Number of Vacation Days Per Year

Italy	42	France	37 days	Germany	35
Brazil	34	UK	28	Canada	26
Korea	25	Japan	25	US	13

- **Media Requests:**

- **Spas, golf, wine, and restaurants:** Margaret writes golf & wine in ClubLink News, a wine column in The National Post and restaurant reviews for Gault Millau's website Gayot.com. She said she always on the lookout for good material for these regular columns. Also, her new contact information is 2 Hawthorn Gardens, suite 4, Toronto Ontario Canada M4W 1P3.

Deadline: 20th Jun, 15:53

Contact Name: Margaret Swaine

Publication: ClubLink News/The National Post/Gayot.com

Email: m.swaine@rogers.com

- **Internet Travel Monitor - Industry News** May 21, 2008 ~ **Most Americans Planning Summer Travel:** NEW YORK, NY – Nine out of 10 US consumers are planning leisure travel this summer, according to a TripAdvisor survey. High gas prices, however, are predicted to have an effect on travel plans. Close to 40% of respondents said they will take fewer car trips this summer, while 18% said they will take shorter car trips. Overall, 73% of those surveyed will be taking a summer vacation by car, and 71% plan on air travel. Unfavorable exchange rates will also have an impact on summer travel. Nearly one-third of respondents said they will travel to a destination with a more favorable exchange rate, and 19% said they will stay at less expensive accommodations. "High gas prices, a weak US dollar and the struggling economy are conspiring against Americans, but travelers refuse to stay home this summer," said Michele Perry, vice president of global communications for TripAdvisor, in a statement.
www.tripinfo.com/ITM/Articles2008/ITM2265.html
- **Native Artist Exchange National Travel Fund** ~ The New England Foundation for the Arts is offering support for native artists residing in the US to travel to different regions of the country for an exchange of artistic knowledge and skills. Travel grants will be awarded up to \$1,500. Applications must be received at least two months prior to the proposed project. For more information, visit the [NEFA Web site](#) or call 617-951-0010 ext. 525.
- **Calling all Paula Deen Fans!!** Do you know someone who has a Christmas Cookie Recipe that is good enough to impress Paula Deen herself? We are looking for the most deserving fan to join Paula in her kitchen and share their amazing Christmas Cookie Recipe. To nominate that special someone in your life, please send an e-mail explaining why they are the perfect choice for this once in a lifetime opportunity. You never know where a cookie recipe might take you!! You must live within 4 hours driving distance of Savannah, GA to participate. ***E-mail recipesforpaula@gmail.com and include: Name, e-mail address, mailing address, phone number, a photo of the person being nominated, the recipe and, of course, your reason for why this person deserves the chance to share their recipe with Paula. Please NO phone calls.

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.)

June 2	Deadline for Tourism Product Development Grant Application
June 5	Hotel Tax Seminar, Suwanee, GA
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:

- June 6, 2008 Columbus Visitor Center email Columbus@georgia.org for more info
- June 7, 2008 Plains Visitor Center email plains@georgia.org for more info
- July 18, 2008 Augusta Visitor Center email augusta@georgia.org for more info