



Regional Representative Update
March 2009

- **Facebook – This is a great way to network** - Become a Friend of Plantation Trace on Facebook. Use this social gathering to inform friends on new events, meetings and share photos of your community. Please let us know if you have a Facebook page. Members that currently have pages are: Thomasville, Theatre Guild Valdosta and Albany Welcome Center.
- **Explore Georgia Facebook page** -The latest trip ideas, special offers, events and travel news can still be found on the **Explore Georgia** Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Explore-Georgia/36470358490>) – we encourage everyone to become a fan of the page and check it out, as it is updated regularly.
- **GA Governor’s Conference on Tourism** – registration info at <http://www.georgiagtc.com/>
- **STS Marketing College - REGISTRATION IS OPEN** - 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.
- **Co-Op Marketing Grant information and application are now on-line. The deadline for submission has been extended to July 31, 2009**
- **GDEcD has a new photo contest - January 1st launched this new program on www.ExploreGeorgia.org**
The contest is open to U.S. citizens, 18 years or older. Once photos are submitted, GDEcD will have full usage rights of photographs. There will be one winner each month through October 2009 and winners will be chosen by an internal judging panel. Each winner will receive a new GPS system and will be featured in the 2010 Georgia Travel Guide.
- **Georgia's Creative Economies website** for marketing and promoting Georgia Made Georgia Grown Products. The website will connect buyers and sellers, corporations and corporate suppliers, locals and visitors to Georgia's creative small businesses. The listing is free to Georgia-based artisans, theaters, crafters, Agritourism venues, festival planners and others looking to enhance their marketing and advertising. Public launch is scheduled for Jan 23rd. To register your Georgia Made or Georgia Grown product, go to www.gamadegagrown.org and follow the instructions. Visit www.georgia.org/foundation to learn more about this economic development effort led by the Georgia Tourism Foundation.
- **2009 Techno Tourism Conference** April 20 & 21 - due to budget constraints, the Techno Tourism Conference has been moved to Chattahoochee Technical College in Marietta. The dates remain April 20 and 21. Hotel recommendations will follow shortly. Because the grant process is on hold, the requirement for attendance in order to receive funding is waived.
- **GDEcD's RESEARCH UPDATE**
GDEcD's Monthly Research Newsletter is available at www.marketgeorgia.org in the industry research section. The report features a variety of Georgia and national travel indicators.
- **Peach Byte!** – GDEcD's official Georgia Tourism Monthly E-Newsletter available to everyone. If you have not yet signed up to receive Peach Byte, please send an email to peachbyte@georgia.org requesting that your e-mail address be added. If you would like to see past editions of Peach Byte, visit: <http://my.georgia.org/net/content/go.aspx?s=244185.72586.26.3011>

- **Market Georgia Tourism is an excellent resource for tourism professionals.** You will find industry research, industry presentations, grant information, excellent contact information and more...information is added weekly: <http://my.georgia.org/core/item/page.aspx?s=72456.72586.26.3011>
UPDATE: In April 09, www.marketgeorgia.org will be redirected to www.georgia.org/travel.
- **Request for Packages** – Tourism division is looking for lodging/attraction packages to use in Georgia Travel Promotions. Please submit any packages to your regional rep. at jstubbs@georgia.org. Packages need to include lodging and at least one attraction (Meals Optional) There is no deadline but the sooner the better.
- **www.ExploreGeorgia.org** – Make sure you are updating your free listing on the State tourism website. If you need assistance with how to register or navigate the partner admin pages, please contact me.
- **MAKE YOUR EXPLOREGEORGIA.ORG LISTING STAND OUT**
This new "**Most Relevant**" search ranking provides site visitors with a great user experience, and it also lets you have some control in how highly your listing ranks in search results! We've provided some tips for making your **ExploreGeorgia.org** listing stand out: Taking these simple steps will help your listing get more exposure and marketing to the more than 40,000 people that visit **exploregeorgia.org** each month.

Upload a Logo/Default Photo: There's nothing more important to the quality of your listing than having your logo (or a small photo) uploaded to represent your listing. These images appear on the search result page and help site visitors identify your listing and entice them to learn more.

Upload More Photos: Now that we've updated the photo gallery page for your listings, it's more important than ever to upload photos of your listing. The more photos you upload, the more opportunities you have to market your attraction/lodging to site visitors.

Have a Great Summary and Description: Your summary gives visitors a quick snapshot of your listing, and should be written to make you stand out in the crowd. You only have 300 characters, so make your words count. Point out a couple of exciting features of your listing. The description is your chance to really market your listing. Take this chance to tell visitors about all of the great features that make your attraction or lodging unique

- **2009 Georgia On My Mind Day** dates for all of the state Visitor Information Centers
March 27th – Columbus
April 3rd – Valdosta
April 16th – Sylvania
May 9th – Plains
May 15th – Kingsland
May 22nd – Lavonia
May 29th – Savannah
June 5th – Tallapoosa
June 19th – Ringgold
July 17th – Augusta
July 31st – West Point

These events offer an opportunity to set up at the VIC with others in the Industry...a chance to show travelers how much we have to offer as a state. As always this is a FREE opportunity. For more information please contact the individual centers. Contact info can be found at <http://web.georgia.org/net/content/search.aspx?s=0.0.26.3011&load=1&keyword=Georgia%20Visitor%20Information%20Center&maintitle=Georgia%20Visitor%20Information%20Centers&searchtype=Exact>

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