



# Destination Marketing News

*Home of American Golf*

*Your Tourism Industry Update from the Convention & Visitors Bureau*

**August 2008**

## TOURISM NEWS

### **2007 VISITOR SPENDING**

Visitors to Moore County in 2007 spent a record \$349 million, which generated in excess of \$28.6 million in state and local taxes. Moore county maintained its 11<sup>th</sup> position in visitor spending out of the 100 counties in the state, placing it ahead of larger metro areas such as Greenville, Jacksonville, Burlington, New Bern, Statesville and Gastonia. Tourism in the county in 2007 supported 5,220 direct jobs, and indirectly thousands more. These taxes generated by visitors helped lessen the burden that Moore County residents have to bear, to the tune of over \$1,000 per Moore County household. Total visitor spending for the state, and its 100 counties, topped \$17 billion for the first time ever.

Note: While the visitor spending was a record for the county, it represented a 1% increase over 2006 which does not match up with lodging taxes (up 8%) and retail sales (up 12%) generated over the same period. The CVB has officially requested the state and the study contractor, TIA, to investigate this discrepancy to determine if an error was made and any changes made will be reported in the next newsletter.

### **FOR YOUR JUNIOR GOLFER**

Most golf destinations cater to adult golfers, but in the Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen Area of NC, kids have lots of options whether they are just learning the game or participating in junior tournaments. The Pit golf course is the host site for the LPGA-USGA Girls' Golf Club just for girls 7-17 years old and only \$10 for a year's membership. Seven out of eight Pinehurst resort courses have tees set up using U.S. Kids Golf standards as well as U.S. Kids Golf rental clubs. At Longleaf Golf & Country Club, kids under 17 play for free with a paid adult and can get a free 20-minute lesson from the PGA staff. There are kids' golf day camps for ages 9-16 at the venerable Pine Needles resort. Special tees for kids are found on the Donald Ross designed course (yellow tees for ages 8-12 and green tees for 5-7). The Pine Needles resort offers free golf to kids under 12 with a paying adult. There is also a four-hole practice loop which is great for promoting junior golf and a family outing. Besides the kid-friendly golf amenities, many of the lodging facilities offer kids' rates. And of course, there are several great ice cream shops in the area.

## **2008 “BEST PLACES TO PLAY” RATINGS FROM GOLF DIGEST**

The biannual Golf Digest star rating for golf courses provides comprehensive information on public access golf courses, helping compare golf destinations and courses. In creating this biannual rating, the publication conducts the only objective, comprehensive survey of golfers. It is the standard by which public access courses are judged. For 2008, 31 of the area’s 44 courses were rated. Those that weren’t did not receive enough ballots because the course was either too new or it was a private or semi-private course.

For 2008, only 17 U.S. courses garnered the coveted 5-star rating. Since the ratings began in 1992, Pinehurst No. 2 is the only course in North Carolina to achieve this designation in each rating cycle. All 31 courses in the area achieved a rating of 3 stars or higher and of those, 23 rated 4 stars or better.

To highlight the current ratings, 16 of the area courses saw their rating improve by a half star or more since 2006. Here is how the area golf courses rated (those in **bold** moved up at least one half star):

**5 Stars:** Pinehurst No. 2

**4 ½ Stars:** Pinehurst No. 4, Pinehurst No. 8, Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club, Talamore, Tobacco Road, Little River Golf Club, Mid Pines Inn & Golf Club, **Pinehurst No. 6, Pinehurst No. 7, The Pit Golf Links**

**4 Stars:** Legacy Golf Links, Pinehurst No. 1, Pinewild Country Club (Holly), Seven Lakes Country Club, Woodlake Country Club (Maples), **Beacon Ridge Country Club, The Carolina, Foxfire Country Club (East), Deercroft Golf Club, Longleaf Golf & Country Club, Pinehurst No. 3, Woodlake Country Club (Palmer)**

**3 ½ Stars:** Foxfire Country Club (West), **Pinehurst No. 5**, Hyland Hills Golf Club, National Golf Club

**3 Stars:** **Country Club of Whispering Pines (East), Country Club of Whispering Pines (West), The Bluff Golf Links, Whispering Woods**

## **US TRAVELERS STILL NEED TO TRAVEL SAYS AN AMEX POLL**

From jetting overseas for a culinary experience to a desire to learn life-enriching skills while on vacation, travelers are intent on continuing to pursue travel experiences that allow them to indulge in their personal interests despite the softening economy, according to a recent survey by American Express Travel. Indeed, 57% of the 501 U.S. adults surveyed indicated that the number of vacations involving one or more personal "passions" would either remain the same or increase over the next two years; of those, 28% indicated that they expect the number to increase. At least 60% of respondents said that even though they feel the U.S. economy is currently in or edging toward a recession, travel is so important to their mental health and lifestyle that they have not let economic concerns impact their plans. ([www.ModernAgent.com](http://www.ModernAgent.com), 7/30)

## **GOVERNMENT PER DIEM RATES**

A long-term goal of area hotels and the CVB is to have a Continental U.S. (CONUS) destination rate established specifically for our county that is reflective of a fair lodging rate for government per diem business. Currently our county falls into the “catch all” standard category with many rural, non-resort destinations with a \$70 lodging rate (2008). The good news is that through lobbying, Cumberland County, which was in the same position as Moore County, did receive a unique destination classification for 2009 for \$85 lodging rate. To correct this for Moore County, we are working closely with BRAC officials to either add Moore in under the Cumberland designation umbrella or have a new unique designation just for Moore County. The CVB will keep you abreast of the progress made.

## **GOLFERS GAIN FROM 40% CUT IN DEATH RATE, STUDY FINDS**

*Excerpts from the article.* "The death rate for golfers is 40 percent lower than for other people of the same sex, age and socioeconomic status," a study published in the Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports found.

This equates to a five-year increase in life expectancy said scientists at the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm. Golfers with a low handicap -- a measure of a player's ability -- are the best protected, they said.

"A round of golf means being outside for 4 or 5 hours, walking at a fast pace for 6 to 7 kilometers (3.7 to 4.4 miles), something which is known to be good for health," Ahlbom said in an e-mailed statement. "People play golf into old age, and there are also positive social and psychological aspects to the game that can be of help."

## **BIG PLANS FOR LITTLE RIVER GOLF & RESORT**

Oceanico, owner of 600-acre Little River Farm, unveiled their master plan for the development in Carthage.

- Upgrading the golf course under a 4-year plan. First up - new tee boxes now in progress
- The PUD (Planned Unit Development) is in place, and the first residential models are being built. The full project has 1,100+ units offering single family, condos, townhouses, and fractional ownership options. Golf management of the course is by Troon Golf, one of the leading golf course management companies in the world
- Entrance and Boulevard enhancements – new design will feature an equestrian/craftsman themed architecture along the complete boulevard which will link US 15/501 and NC 22
- Long-term plans include a retail village and a new 159-room hotel, spa, and conference facilities, as well as an assisted living center
- North American headquarters for Oceanico will be in the Village of Pinehurst, as the company continues its expansion plans
- Construction management contact is Rich Smith at Little River

## **RECREATION IS ON THE RISE PER U.S. FOREST SERVICE STUDY**

While the types of outdoor activities are changing, the trend for getting "nature-based" recreation continues to increase, according to a recently released study. The number of people nationwide who participated in outdoor activities grew 4.4 percent, or by about 9 million people, from 2000-07 according to a study released last week by the U.S. Forest Service Southern Research Station in Asheville. The survey showed that two of the three fastest growing "nature-based" activities involved photographing flowers and trees and visiting and photographing natural scenery. The third fastest-growing nature-based activity was driving off-road vehicles. Activities like mountain biking, cold water fishing and whitewater rafting had declining participation, according to the study. To find out more, visit <http://www.citizen-times.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008808110307>

# MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS



## **ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NEW 2009 DESTINATION GUIDE**

As some of you already know, Layne Straka, from Pace Communications has been visiting local businesses to offer advertising space in the Official Destination & Golf Guide for the area. The publication will be ready by the end of the year and it is a great tool for marketing your business to over a million potential visitors to the area. Not only will the destination guide be printed and distributed through multiple channels, it will be available on the CVB's website for downloading. If you would like to arrange an appointment with Layne, you can email her at [Layne.Straka@paceco.com](mailto:Layne.Straka@paceco.com).

## **ESSENTIALS GUIDE IS UNDERWAY FOR 2009**

The CVB includes a calendar of events as part of the "Essentials" guide, the Official Destination Guide's companion piece. In order to have your 2009 event included, we must receive the details by September 30, 2008. The guide must go to the printer long before the end of the year and if we don't have your information, it just won't be in the guide for visitors to see. Please contact Lisa Long at [llong@ncrrbiz.com](mailto:llong@ncrrbiz.com) with your event details or call her at 910-692-3330, ext. 238.

## **FOCUS ON: THE PINEHURST AREA, THE HOME OF AMERICAN GOLF**

As seen on [GolfTips.com](http://www.golftips.com), writer Charlie Schroeder talks about the wonderful golf, where to play and the other "diversions" that can be found in the Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen area while you're visiting. To see the full article, go to <http://www.golftipsmag.com/travel/southeast/focus-on-the-pinehurst-area.html>.

## **NY TIMES STORY ON PINEHURST, SOUTHERN PINES, ABERDEEN AREA BY STEVEN WELLS**

When most people think of Pinehurst, they think of a fancy golf resort in south-central North Carolina whose Course No. 2 has been the site of two United States Open tournaments in the last nine years and where this year's United States Amateur championship will be decided on Sunday (Aug. 24).

They don't usually envision the turn-of-the-century New England-style village that preceded and surrounds it, where life isn't so much fancy as it is a throwback to an era of casual gentility.

For the full article, go to:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/22/greathomesanddestinations/22havens.html?\\_r=1&ref=todayspaper&coref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/22/greathomesanddestinations/22havens.html?_r=1&ref=todayspaper&coref=slogin). Thanks to Janeen Driscoll at the Pinehurst resort for working with the writer on this story.

## **LUNCH 'N LEARN TO START AT THE CVB**

Marketing Director, Claire Phillips, recently returned from the Southeast Tourism Society's Tourism Marketing College held at N. Georgia College and State University in Dahlonega, GA. The classes were taught by experienced tourism professionals who provided real world examples and suggestions for

improving tourism marketing skills whether you represent accommodations, attractions, or destinations. Claire will be conducting lunch ‘n learn classes at the CVB to share information and ideas from the classes she attended. The first topic will be about creating effective rack brochures. We see them all the time, but why are some brochures never picked up while others drive business to your establishment? The one-hour class will review the components of a well-designed brochure and how you can update/create this key visitor communication tool. Look for details soon.

### **GOLF WRITERS MEDIA TOUR IN JULY**

The CVB hosted several golf and tourism writers in mid-July to encourage more exposure for the area as it relates to golf and the kinds of amenities golfers like to enjoy off the course. The Pit, Legacy Links, and Woodlake provided challenging golf and gave the media time to understand what we mean when we say we are the “Home of American Golf®.” The guests were also introduced to Disc golf on the new course located in Hillcrest Park in Carthage. The state’s department of tourism was also represented and was impressed with the efforts being made for Kids’ Golf and was sending a photographer to capture the excitement of the parade of golfers that was held for the first time in the Village of Pinehurst. Many thanks to the staff at The Pit for their hospitality and support.

### **EDITORS FROM NC SIGNATURE AND OUR STATE MEDIA TOUR IN AUGUST**

Hosting editors from Our State and NC Signature magazine in early August, the CVB provided a media tour to promote story ideas for both publications for their 2009 schedules. Story ideas about lifestyle, dining, lodging options, eclectic shopping, horses and golf were aplenty. Many thanks to the Knollwood House B&B for their gracious hospitality.

### **SOUTHERN PINES – PINEHURST AREA RANKED #2 “DREAMTOWN” IN NC, 5<sup>TH</sup> IN THE NATION**

The Southern Pines-Pinehurst area has once again received national accolades as one of the nation’s most desirable places to live.

Following on the heels of independent research firm POLICOM’s recent 2008 ranking of the area as 27<sup>th</sup> in Economic Strength out of 577 micropolitan areas in the United States, American City Business Journals (ACBJ) has ranked Southern Pines-Pinehurst as the No. 2 best “Dreamtown” in North Carolina and the 35<sup>th</sup> best in the nation out of 140 smaller communities evaluated throughout the United States.

ACBJ is the largest publisher of metropolitan business newsweeklies in the United States. The company manages 41 papers, including Triangle Business Journal covering the Raleigh-Durham area, in addition to several magazines.

ACBJ’s study looked at communities with populations of more than 10,000, but less than 50,000 to identify the nation’s most attractive areas based on quality of life criteria. It gave the highest scores to those with less traffic congestion, solid economies, moderate costs of living, strong educational systems, and easy access to the offerings and attractions of metropolitan areas.

### **CONSORTIUM FOR PROMOTING AREA EVENTS/ATTRACTIONS**

The consortium meeting was held in June. Many people were on vacation so the group was small. The next meeting will be scheduled for late September. In the meantime, the CVB is collecting a list of free things visitors can do in Moore County. We have a good list started, but want to hear from you too. Send your suggestions to [cphillips@ncrrbiz.com](mailto:cphillips@ncrrbiz.com).

As an additional area of interest, the CVB met with several local citizens representing the media, arts and cultural groups to discuss the possibility of an arts festival that would be held in 2010. A working theme around, "Magic in the Pines" was suggested at the last meeting. The group will meet again in September to further discuss concepts, venues, dates, festival management structure and sponsorships.

## MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS



### **BIDS FOR 2009 & 2010 USA LEAGUE TENNIS TOURNAMENTS – IN THE WORKS!**

The CVB, working with the Pines Host committee will present bids to NC Tennis Association for the 2009 and 2010 USTA Adult League and Super Senior Tennis Tournaments. The CVB compiled over 15 bid books to present to the NCTA bid committee including Welcome Letters from local dignitaries, County Commissioners as well as the area's bid response from the CVB. We need everyone's support to keep these events in Moore County.

### **TRIAD SALES BLITZ – NOVEMBER 2008 “LET’S HIT THE PAVEMENT”**

Calling all sales professionals interested in participating in an area sales blitz to Greensboro, High Point, and Winston-Salem in November 2008. A meeting will be held in early September to plan the dates and determine the participants. The CVB will supply each participant with updated information from each city i.e. Largest Employers, Chamber Directories etc. to use for sales calls as we prospect for new business.

### **REPEAT! CVB SALES PROMOTION, “KEEP GROUPS IN MOORE COUNTY”**

The CVB has a new promotion/incentive for area Sales Professionals to help “Keep Groups in Moore County.” The program will provide incentives for Sales Directors/Managers who send group leads/prospects to the CVB that can not be accommodated by their property. To be eligible to win, the referred group *must book* at an area property. The prize list includes certificates for area dining, golf at local courses, and a grand prize (TBD) for the most referrals booked. The winner will be recognized in the Destination Marketing news and prizes will be awarded quarterly. For more info on the program, contact Beverly Stewart at [bstewart@ncrrbiz.com](mailto:bstewart@ncrrbiz.com).

### **AARP LIFE@50 ANNUAL MEETING & TRADESHOW**

Area co-op partners and the CVB will participate for the first time in the AARP Life@50 Annual meeting and tradeshow September 4-7, 2008 in Washington, DC. With over 30,000 attendees registered to attend the annual meeting & tradeshow, this event offers our area an opportunity to market to the very active 50+senior traveler.

## **AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES (ASAE) – ANNUAL MEETING & TRADESHOW**

The ASAE Annual Meeting & Tradeshow was held August 15-20, 2008 in San Diego. The tradeshow was a cooperative effort with Pinehurst Resort and the CVB Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen to promote Moore County to meeting planners representing International, National, Regional and State Associations.

## **WHO'S COMING TO TOWN?**

Moore County will be hosting the following meeting & convention groups in September, October & November 2008:

- Triad Sports National Baseball Tournaments – August, September, October (2 dates) and November 2008
- NC Department of Agriculture – September 2008
- Five Points Horse Trials – September 2008
- NC Connemara Pony Society – October 2008

## **UPCOMING TRADESHOWS**

The CVB will represent our area to potential Meeting & Convention and Golf Group Planners at the following meetings & tradeshows:

- AARP Life@50 Annual Meeting & Tradeshow – September 6 -8, 2008
- AENC Meeting – September 12, 2008
- Meeting Masters – November 17-19, 2008
- AENC Annual Meeting & Tradeshow – December 11, 2008

## AREA HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES



### **LADY BEDFORD'S TEA PARLOUR & GIFT SHOPPE**

The newest dining addition to the Village of Pinehurst is Lady Bedford's Tea Parlour. Enjoy the British tradition of afternoon tea or enjoy lunch at this new establishment. Catering is also provided. Find Lady Bedford's at 25 Chinquapin Road, right in the heart of the village. Website: [www.ladybedfords.com](http://www.ladybedfords.com) or phone: 910-255-0100.

### **HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS**

The newest addition to the area's lodging options will be ready for the fall golf season. The Holiday Inn Express located at 155 Partner Circle, behind Chili's on Hwy. 15 -501, will have 77 rooms with either 2 queen-sized beds or a king bed. The property includes an outdoor pool, small board room, fitness room, and is a 100% smoke free facility. The opening date is targeted for September 2, 2008.

## NEW TO ROBBINS

“Play Station Too,” this family entertainment center, next to the Little Village Restaurant features pool tables, video games, and Hershey’s hand dipped ice cream. It is owned and operated by long time residents Brian, Juanita, Aaron and Alli Allen.

## ANOTHER CANOE LAUNCH

In addition to the route 705 canoe access under the bridge at Bear Creek in Robbins, Foothills Outdoors has installed a paddling ‘put in at Reynolds Mill Road. Stay tuned for more paddling events and opportunities to volunteer with the characters of Foothills Outdoors.

## BRICK OVEN BISTRO

Now open in Seven Lakes, the Brick Oven Bistro, provides family-friendly dining featuring brick oven pizza. The restaurant is located on Hwy. 211 in Seven Lakes Plaza, Seven Lakes. Phone: 910-673-1519.

## NEW INDUSTRY CONTACTS

A warm welcome and congratulations to new staff that have been promoted or moved into positions that impact area tourism and hospitality:

- Tom Jenkins, Director of Sales, Homewood Suites by Hilton
- Andy Martin, General Manager, Best Western
- Kathy Watkins, General Manager, Holiday Inn Express
- Kathee Dishner, Club Manager, Country Club of NC

If you have information you would like to share to keep everyone up to date on additions or changes to your staff, please contact Karen Davis at the Convention & Visitors Bureau at 692-3330, ext 236.



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