



*Home of American Golf*

# Destination Marketing News

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

**March 2009**

## TOURISM NEWS

### **PINEHURST ANNOUNCES MULTI-YEAR PARTNERSHIP WITH U.S. KIDS GOLF**

**P**inehurst Resort has signed an official partnership agreement with U.S. Kids Golf that will extend through 2013. The agreement will enable the continuation of the successful U.S. Kids Golf World Championship that has been held at Pinehurst, and adds a series of events and programs over the next four years.

Included in the agreement is the siting of the [U.S. Kids Golf World Championship](#) at Pinehurst Resort using three of the resort courses and six area courses through 2013. The event has been held at Pinehurst and the region for the last three years, welcoming over 1,000 junior golfers ages 6-12 from over 40 countries and generated a multi-million dollar economic impact on the area. This year's Championship is scheduled for August 6-9, 2009.

[The U.S. Kids Golf Teen Championship](#) for ages 13-17 will also be sited at Pinehurst Resort and Pine Needles through the length of the agreement, beginning with the 2009 event to be staged July 30 – August 2.

### **GOLFWEEK'S NC TOP TEN COURSES FOR 2009**

**G**reat news for golfers enjoying courses in the Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen Area. Golfweek magazine has announced their Golfweek's Best rankings. Seven out of the top ten public-access courses in North Carolina are right here in the Sandhills. The seven courses are: Pinehurst No. 2 in the #1 position, Pine Needles in the #2 position, Tobacco Road in the #5 position, Mid Pines in the #6 position, Pinehurst No. 4 in the #7 position, Pinehurst No. 8 in the #8 position, and Southern Pines CC in the #9 position. It's a great showing considering there are more than 500 courses in North Carolina. The other "Bests" lists can be found in the March 14, 2009 issue of Golfweek.

### **THE ROCK IS SOLID**

Rockingham Speedway has a solid schedule coming up for race fans. Start the season on April 17 for UARA practice and qualifying for THUNDERFEST and then on April 18 the ARCA/REMAX practice and qualifying UARA race.

Scheduled events for 2009 also include:

- July 3-4 CHERRY BOMB 200

- October 9 USA Racing PRO CUP Series Race, October 10 ARCA/REMAX PRO CUP Series, and October 11 ARCA AMERICAN 200
- January 1, 2010 POLAR BEAR 150

For more information, got to [www.rockingham Speedway.com](http://www.rockingham Speedway.com).

## **GLASS BLOWING OPEN HOUSE AT STARWORKS**

Come and enjoy the art of glass blowing on April 18, 2009 from 5-7 pm at STARworks Glass located in Star, NC. Enjoy live glassblowing from 5-6 pm, video presentations, hands-on instruction from 6-7 pm, blown glass art for sale, and refreshments.

For additional information, contact Mike Linzy at 910-428-9001.

## **FIRE DAMAGES PINE NEEDLES DINING ROOM, RESORT STILL FULLY OPERATIONAL**

A fire of unknown origin damaged the Clubhouse Dining Room at the Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club on Sunday evening, March 15 at approximately 8:00 pm.

Area firefighters extinguished the blaze at about 1:00 am Monday morning. A source said that the fire may have been caused by an electrical shortage. The fire originated in between the floor of the dining room and the ceiling of the ladies locker room area.

CEO, Kelly Miller, said the Resort is open and activities will continue as planned. The main dining room will be closed for repairs for an unknown period of time.

"We regret that this fire has occurred," Miller said, "and appreciate the fine job that all area fire departments did. As a result of the great work of the fire personnel, damage was kept to a minimum, enabling us to continue with operating our business. Our entire staff has been terrific throughout this unfortunate incident and they have gone out of their way to make sure our guests are inconvenienced as little as possible."

For further information, please call Mid Pines Inn & Golf Club at (800) 323-2114 or (910) 692-2114 or online at [www.pineneedles-midpines.com](http://www.pineneedles-midpines.com)

## **SCHOOL START DATE UNDER ATTACK**

Legislation, in the form of three new bills, has been introduced in the NC legislature to give counties the ability to move the popular Aug 25 school start date back to an early August date. The state tourism industry has worked very hard to ensure summers include most of August by supporting legislation in 2005 to require schools to start no earlier than Aug. 25. This allows students to work through the summer, keeping season tourism businesses staffed, and it has increased visitor spending across the state. For more information on this issue, and ways in which you can help keep the current legislation in place, see [saveoursummer.com](http://saveoursummer.com).

## **NC GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON TOURISM**

Held the first week of March in Raleigh, Governor Perdue and the new Secretary of Commerce pledged their support to the industry, and stressed the importance of travel and tourism in NC. The governor reinforced the commitment to include \$1.5 million in additional funding in the 2009-2010 budget in order to increase NC awareness as a business and visitor destination. Lynn Minges was promoted to Assistant Secretary of the Division of Tourism. The 2008 visitor impact numbers which normally are released at this event will be released in April/May. Numerous educational seminars provided excellent insight on a wide range of topics. Contact the CVB for additional information.

## **NC DIVISION OF TOURISM HAS A NEW WEBSITE**

The new website for the state's division of tourism launched in early 2009 and includes more information for consumers about North Carolina as well as the Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen Area via the CVB's placement in events, extranet golf site, etc. Check out the new site for yourself at [www.visitnc.com](http://www.visitnc.com).

## **STONEHILL DEVELOPMENT COMING TO FOXFIRE**

The Florida-based Stonehill Capital Group master plan for the development of a 1,500-acre resort community in Foxfire has passed the first hurdle in the approval process. The Foxfire Village Council approved the rezoning request to a planned unit development (PUD) recommended by the Foxfire Village planning and zoning board.

The plans for the resort community include two Jack Nicklaus signature golf courses, a luxury hotel, and up to 1,050 residences.

## **CENTRAL PARK NC VISITOR MAP**

Central Park NC will be producing its very popular visitor map again this year. Copies of the existing map that features restaurants, attractions, lodging, bike trails and scenic byways for the 8-county region are available at the CVB or go to [www.centralparknc.org](http://www.centralparknc.org). Partnership opportunities will be available for those interested in being featured on the map. For more information, contact the CVB.

## **2009 OFFICIAL DESTINATION & GOLF GUIDE NOW ONLINE**

The CVB is pleased to announce that the 2009 Destination & Golf Guide is now available online at [www.homeofgolf.com](http://www.homeofgolf.com). Consumers can view the guide page by page, print any page or all of the guide, and links are provided throughout the guide for easier navigation to businesses listed in the guide. You can take a look at [www.homeofgolf.com/visitorguide](http://www.homeofgolf.com/visitorguide).

# MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS



## **SURVEY SAYS....**

Following the popular annual, "Room at the Inn" program, the CVB conducts a review with participants to find out how successful the program is year to year. The 2008 program proved again the importance of "Room at the Inn" for generating room nights at local hotels during the quiet demand time of post-Thanksgiving through New Year's Day. Respondents indicated that on average 50% of inquiries from the advertisement in The Pilot converted to a reservation of at least one night. The CVB estimates that more than \$200,000 in room revenue was generated for the destination in 2008. The Pilot newspaper has supported the program for the last 7 years with annual advertising in the newspaper totaling over \$20,000. The program began with the holiday season following 9/11. Partnerships like the one between the The Pilot and CVB are valuable every day and even more so since tourism is so strongly affected by economics and the media coverage.

## **MARKETING CO-OP PROGRAM PLANNING IS UNDERWAY FOR '09-'10**

The Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) is working diligently preparing the marketing co-op program for fiscal year '09-'10 that begins July 1, 2009. The program is designed to maximize marketing budgets by selecting media and advertising mix that promotes and compliments the tourism industry partners in Moore County. The program will be launched in May.

Initially, the CVB sent an online survey to co-op partners to better understand their needs and find new opportunities for enhancing the program. Following the survey, focus groups were conducted to further fine tune the program's features and management reporting to ensure its value to marketing partners.

Concurrently, an RFP was distributed to potential media and the resulting proposals will be reviewed to determine the opportunities that will be available in next year's program.

## **NEW ONLINE MAPPING FEATURES AVAILABLE ON CVB WEBSITE**

The CVB recently partnered with Navteq to produce the area's official interactive online destination map with enhanced features on its website [www.homeofgolf.com](http://www.homeofgolf.com). As more and more consumers use the internet for planning trips and finding amenities once they arrive at their destination, the new features help them discover the area easily and with more detail.

The new mapping features include listings of meeting facilities and restaurants in addition to existing listings for accommodations and golf courses. The MapIt link supports one click to zoom in on a property or attraction automatically. And because the area has so many golf courses located in a concentrated area, the new tool is a handy resource for golfers who like a more visual view of their golf trip itinerary.

## **SOUTHERN PINES VISITOR WELCOME CENTER**

The CVB is designing and distributing a new brochure for the Southern Pines Visitor Welcome Center located in the train depot in downtown Southern Pines. The brochure will be available in the information center located at 10677 Hwy 15-501, Southern Pines.

## MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS



## **JOIN THE FIGHT FOR "MEETINGS MEAN BUSINESS"**

The U.S. Travel Association along with other travel industry coalitions unveiled a new information and advertising campaign called, "Meetings Mean Business," to fight irresponsible attacks from the media and government that are causing massive cancellations of meetings incentives, and events as well as postponements of future bookings.

The Meetings Mean Business campaign includes full page ads in USA Today and other print media as well as a new Web site, [www.meetingmeanbusiness.com](http://www.meetingmeanbusiness.com) where visitors and travel professionals can find information on the value of meetings, sample letters to legislators and newspapers, and other data and information.

Members of the travel industry are challenged to join the “Grassroots army” by visiting the [www.meetingsmeanbusiness.com](http://www.meetingsmeanbusiness.com) web site and sign the Keep American Meeting petition and ask others to do the same. Stand up and be heard!

## **UPDATE - WHITE HOUSE NOW URGES BUSINESS TRAVEL**

Urged by travel-industry leaders, the White House has stepped in to recommend that Americans hit the road. In droves, companies and other organizations have been canceling meetings, sending fewer salespeople out on the road, hosting fewer customer dinners, and withdrawing plans for reward trips to resorts for their best employees. U.S. hotel occupancy in the first quarter is likely to slip below 60 percent, a money-losing level for most lodging. The retreat from travel means a vast number of empty hotel ballrooms, conference centers, and restaurants, which in turn is resulting in layoffs for hundreds of thousands of workers in the hospitality business.

By early March, the industry's campaign appeared to be helping change the atmosphere. On Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, Obama spokesman Robert Gibbs, answering questions from the White House press corps, said the president has tried to make it clear that he was not critical of all travel, meetings and events - just some of those staged by banks using bailout funds. ([www.PhiladelphiaInquirer.com/Business](http://www.PhiladelphiaInquirer.com/Business)).

For up to date information on the state of the meetings industry go to <http://www.meetingindustrycenter.org>.

## **2010 USGA U.S. GIRLS' JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP**

The United States Golf Association announced that the Country Club of North Carolina will host the 2010 U.S. Girls' Junior Championship. The dates of the championship will be July 19-24, 2010. The Dogwood course, designed by Ellis Maples and Willard Byrd, will provide an excellent challenge for the U.S. Girls' tournament players. The Dogwood course hosted the 1980 U.S. Amateur (won by Hal Sutton), and has also hosted six Southern Amateurs, seven North Carolina Amateurs and three Carolinas Amateurs.

The CVB Sales Department is assisting the Country Club of North Carolina with area information, accommodation rates and availability as well as logistics related to the players, USGA Officials and Media.

## **CVB SALES ON TWITTER, I-MEETING & FACEBOOK**

Keeping up with technology may seem like an endless chore but the CVB Sales Department is using this media to inform and educate meeting planners about the area. Twitter and I-Meetings are handy ways to keep pertinent area information in front of meeting planners as well as maintain relationships with key clients. The CVB is in the process of creating a new FACEBOOK page for clients to join and gather information about the area.

## **CVB DIRECTOR OF SALES TAPPED TO CO-CHAIR DMANC GROUP SALES**

The Destination Marketing Association – NC Chapter appointed Director of Sales, Beverly Stewart, as co-chair of the newly formed Group Sales Committee. Stewart along with Linda Ekeland, Chapel Hill/Orange County CVB, will work with other NC CVBs to determine future cooperative programs geared toward the meetings market.

The DMANC Group Committee hopes to partner with the NC Department of Commerce and NC Division of Travel and Tourism on cooperative tradeshow, lunch & learn programs in various key markets as well as other programs to increase meeting planner awareness of North Carolina as a meeting destination.

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

**M**oore County will be hosting the following meeting & convention groups in April, May and June 2009:

- American Institute of Architects NC - 2009 Committee Meeting
- NC Bar Association – 2009 Senior Lawyers' Meeting
- 4th Annual Sandhills Adidas Soccer Tournament

## **UPCOMING TRADESHOWS**

**T**he CVB will represent our area to potential Meeting & Convention and Golf Group Planners at the following meetings & tradeshow:

- Meeting Professionals International - Carolinas Chapter – March 19-20, 2009
- Moore County Services Fair – March 27, 2009
- Association Executives of NC Meeting – April 3, 2009



## **SANDHILLS WINERY IN SEVEN LAKES**

**T**here's a new place in Seven Lakes to enjoy the "fruit of the vine." Sandhills Winery, owned and operated by Bob & Leslie Rose, opened March 14 in Seven Lakes Plaza near Peking Wok. The shop is open Tuesday through Saturday and by appointment. For more information, call 910-673-2949.

## **ROBBINS:**

- Cabin Creek Antiques & Collectibles, 142 S. Middleton
- Sunflower Shack (consignment antiques), 126 S. Middleton
- Not Just Nails, NW Broad Street

# SANDHILLS HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

## NEWS AND VIEWS

**D**id you know the Sandhills Hospitality Association (SHA) is a Moore County association that has been in existence for a number of years? It was formed to promote area tourism through mutual hospitality interest and by providing industry-related information, sharing ideas and communications, conducting training and providing educational opportunities. Comprised primarily of area hoteliers and golf courses, the association is open to all tourism-related entities that wish to be kept apprised of Moore County happenings and hear great speakers. All area attractions, restaurants, shops, transportation, equestrian, etc. are invited to join SHA.

Yearly membership (January to December) is \$185 which pays for one person to attend six meetings, an education day in August, in addition to the annual Christmas party/silent auction, annual golf tournament (raising money for scholarships for the hospitality/culinary arts/turf management classes at SCC, Golf & Hospitality Academy), along with various association events.

On May 12<sup>th</sup>, Mid Pines Resort will host a breakfast meeting, and SHA welcomes prospective new members to attend, meet your peers and hear a great speaker. Please contact Lucy at 295-4960 for further information. Future meeting dates, locations and speakers will be given in upcoming newsletters. Newly-elected president, Shane Bussino from Springhill Suites, can also be contacted at (910) 695-0234 for further information about SHA.

The CVB is happy to provide this section of the newsletter as a way for the SHA to increase its communications with the area's businesses, residents, and visitors. Welcome SHA.

## ON THE MOVE

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

- Dan Coleman, General Manager, Hampton Inn & Suites
- Alan Trepczyk, Director of Sales, Little River
- Tommy Combs, Interim Town Manager, Robbins
- Robert Ingraham, Director of Operations, Rockingham Speedway

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.



PINEHURST  
SOUTHERN PINES  
ABERDEEN  
AREA

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