

DMN - Destination Marketing News

Your Tourism Industry Update – March 2010

*Produced by the
Convention & Visitors Bureau*



Tourism News

Signs of an Up Tick in Tourism Business

Room tax collection (and the direct correlation to lodging room sales) for January showed an 11% increase of the same month, prior year. The CVB website has seen unique visitors increased in the last eight out of nine months.

Throughout this month's edition of the DMN you will see other examples of improvement at the national, state, and local level. Have some news of your own to share? Email it to Claire Phillips at cphillips@ncrrbiz.com.

Sandhills Area Golf Scores High within the Ranks of NC Golf Courses

Out of nearly 600 golf courses throughout North Carolina, courses in the Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen area earned 20 spots in the list of Top 100 Golf Courses in the state, as determined annually by the North Carolina Golf Panel. The rankings, published in the March 2010 issue of BUSINESS NORTH CAROLINA, are compiled based on votes cast by a panel of golf industry experts. This gives the area even more recognition as the "Home of American Golf®." The rankings are listed below.

The Golf Panel also produced a Top 12 list for seven different regions within the state - Coastal, Mountains, Triad, Triangle, Charlotte Metro, Eastern and Sandhills. The Sandhills is represented by 8 courses for its region.

And for those golfers who are looking for an extra challenge, the NC Golf Panel noted several "hidden gems" that should be added to their list when visiting the Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen Area.

The Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen region is home to five of the Top 10 golf courses in North Carolina, and eight of the Top 20, as indicated below:

1. Pinehurst No. 2
5. Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club
6. Country Club of North Carolina (Dogwood)
8. Forest Creek Golf Club (South)
10. Pinehurst No. 4
12. Pinehurst No. 8

16. Forest Creek Golf Club (North)
20. Country Club on North Carolina (Cardinal)

Rounding out the Top 100 listing were:

21. National Golf Club
39. Pinehurst No. 7
49. Pinewild Country Club (Magnolia)
54. Mid Pines Inn & Golf Club
55. Mid South Club
63. Tobacco Road Golf Club
86. Seven Lakes Country Club
89. Little River Golf & Resort
92. Pinehurst No. 6
93. Legacy Golf Links
97. Country Club of Whispering Pines (East)
98. Pinewild Country Club (Holly)

Best by Region, Sandhills:

1. Pinehurst No. 2
2. Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club
3. Country Club of North Carolina (Dogwood)
4. Forest Creek Golf Club (South)
5. Pinehurst No. 4
6. Pinehurst No. 8
7. Forest Creek Golf Club (North)
8. Country Club of North Carolina (Cardinal)
9. National Golf Club
10. Pinehurst No. 7
11. Pinewild Country Club (Magnolia)
12. Mid Pines Inn & Golf Club

Hidden Gems, Sandhills:

1. Southern Pines Golf Club (Elks)
2. Mid South Club
4. Legacy Golf Links
5. Talamore Golf Resort

Village of Pinehurst Walking Tour Book

The new Village of Pinehurst Walking Tour Book has been a big hit. It is perfect for VIP gifts, tour packages and as a room amenity. Bulk orders of 10 books or more can be purchased for \$12 each. Please contact Karen Davis for order forms at kdavis@ncrrbiz.com.

The Power of Golf in Moore County

The CVB is working with a group of area golf courses spearheaded by Pine Needles and Mid Pines' Kelly Miller to develop a comprehensive presentation on the value of golf to Moore County. Very few if any

residents would argue that golf isn't important to our economy, but quantifying exactly how valuable takes some work to collect, interpret, and encapsulate the information so everyone can understand it. Future issues of DMN will provide highlights of the efforts. For more information, please contact Caleb Miles at 910-692-3330, ext. 234.

Central Park NC Offerings

If you are not familiar with Central Park NC (CPNC), it is a great resource for tourism businesses in the eight-county region it covers (Moore County included). Learn more about CPNC and sign up for the newsletter at www.centralparknc.org. A variety of classes are currently being offered - everything from Ceramic Classes, Mushroom Workshops, Glass blowing classes and more are available at www.centralparknc.org.

In addition, CPNC will be offering a class entitled, "INKEEPING 2.0," May 18-19, 2010. The two-day event is \$50 with an optional Dinner Package. The location of the classes is Sandhills Community College. For more information and to register call 910.428.9001 or email marla@centralparknc.org.

FLIP Video Cameras Available For Special Use

One of the hottest new marketing tools are FLIP video cameras which allow you to easily shoot video, download for use on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc. The CVB now has several FLIP cameras that can be loaned out to both tourism businesses and visitors. The only catch - video must be useable and suitable for CVB marketing (and of course to the tourism business and visitor). Want a quick lesson on how to use one, complete the release form and see Claire at the Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The Official 2010 NC Golf Guide Now Available

Contact the CVB for up to 5 copies of the definitive guide to North Carolina Golf. Larger quantities beyond that are also available through a warehouse in Charlotte - contact Laurel Stanell at the CVB for more information 910-692-3330 ext. 242.

Profile: Pik N Pig

Roland Gilliam's dream was a familiar one for pilots: He wanted his own airport.

A dream realized. In 1994, at age 54, he stopped dreaming and built 5NC3, Gilliam-McConnell Airfield at Carthage, N.C. Since then, his personal airport has developed into a business enterprise that will not stop growing.

Carthage and the surrounding Pinehurst/Southern Pines area is great golf country, so many pilots brought their clubs along. How about building a driving range, one of them proposed? Gilliam agreed.

A restaurateur wanted to sell barbecue from a mobile van. That van turned into the Pik N Pig, one of the most popular restaurants in the area and one of the best fly-in restaurants in the Carolinas.

On a recent Sunday afternoon, Gilliam, who turns 70 this year, stood behind the counter of yet another airfield enterprise, a gift shop called The Pilot's Wife. The shop is attached to the restaurant and it was

Nancy, Gilliam's wife of 40-plus years, who decided a gift shop was needed to complete the airfield experience for visitors.

The airfield's popularity surged about two years ago when The Pik N Pig opened, Gilliam said. "We've had as many as 50 planes in here at one time," he noted. "They are doing as well or better than any other restaurant in Moore County. People really like coming out here and eating and sitting in a grassroots atmosphere watching airplanes take off and land."

"As we all know, the secret to a fly-in restaurant is to have good local support — and we have very good support," he continued. "Usually there is a waiting line to get in. That's one reason I put the canopy over the patio to give them more seating. Now, doggone it, they got a waiting line there too."

Like to try it out? The restaurant is open Tuesday-Saturday 11 a.m.-8 p.m. and noon-3 p.m. on Sunday. For more information: Pik-N-Pig.com.

As for Gilliam, he says it is "very, very gratifying" to own his own airfield. For the complete article, go to <http://www.generalaviationnews.com/?p=20260>

Hotel Occupancy on the Rise

For the first time since October 2007, occupancy in North Carolina has grown when compared with the same period the previous year. Occupancy in North Carolina is up 1.6 percent through February, according to Smith Travel Research, while year-to-date U.S. occupancy is flat (+0.2 percent) and occupancy in the South Atlantic region is up 1.1 percent. Another encouraging statistic is that year-to-date room demand in North Carolina is up 4.5 percent (U.S. demand +3.2 percent and South Atlantic demand +4.6 percent).

Average Daily Rate (ADR) in the state is still struggling, but appears to be stabilizing. Year-to-date ADR is down -4.6 percent, as compared to U.S. rates being down -5.7 percent and South Atlantic rates being down -6.0 percent. As a result of lower room rates, YTD revenue per available room (RevPAR) in North Carolina is down -3.1 percent (from \$33.92 to \$32.88). This decrease, however, is not as severe as that of the South Atlantic regional decrease of -6.0 percent (from \$54.35 to \$51.07) or the national decrease of -5.5 percent (from \$49.20 to \$46.49).

The complete report is available at www.nccommerce.com/tourism/research.

Marketing & Public Relations

CVB and Social Networking

Follow us on Twitter at [usahomeofgolf!](https://twitter.com/usahomeofgolf)

Become a Fan of our Facebook Page - [Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen Area CVB!](#)

2010-2011 CVB Marketing Co-Op Program

Plans are underway for the next year's marketing co-op program. The CVB is considering new options and new creative for the upcoming fiscal year. We will be talking with current co-op members and staff

to review and revise the program to make it more robust and responsive to the marketing needs and budgets of our partners. Got some ideas? Let Claire Phillips know at cphillips@ncrrbiz.com

Springhill Suites by Marriott Hosts Golf and Tourism Writer

Special thanks to Shane Bussino and his staff for hosting Art McCafferty, Michigan Golf writer and host of the Michigan Golfer program. You can see two of the pieces they videoed on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-L1H14mX1tI> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97Fs51Fgh-A>

If you would like your property to host media when they come to the area to write or produce stories, let Claire Phillips know at cphillips@ncrrbiz.com. The media generally provides promotion of the host property whether in print, video, or online during and after their visit.

Palustris Festival Feedback is Underway

The CVB, along with the Arts Council of Moore County is conducting a survey to gather feedback about the first-ever Palustris Festival. Attendees and event partners are encouraged to respond to the survey so the steering committee can review the successes and identify areas for improvement in the 2011 festival. If you attended any of the festival events, feel free to complete the survey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3P82PIQ>

According to an article in The Pilot on March 31, 2010, Chris Dunn, Executive Director of the Arts Council shared, "...with more than 75 percent of the organizations reporting their numbers, more than 5,000 people reportedly attend the various events. Visitors came from Florida, Arkansas, Massachusetts, Virginia, and South Carolina."

Janet Kentworthy, proprietor of the Rooster's Wife concert series clucked, "I was cautiously optimistic going in, but I think the public response was tremendous and enthusiastic and positive. I thoroughly enjoyed myself."

There is already interest from performers and venues for the 2011 festival that will be held March 24-27, 2011. More information about applications and schedules will be available in the months ahead as the steering committee readies itself for an even bigger and better Palustris Festival.

Meetings & Conventions

Executive Women's Golf Association (EWGA) - 2010 EWGA Golfpalooza Annual Meeting at Pinehurst

The EWGA "Golfpalooza" Annual Meeting is set for historic Pinehurst Resort April 7-10, 2010. Approximately 200 - 300 people are expected to attend this most anticipated event of the year, bringing together women from across the Association with the common goal of playing golf and lots of it, having fun, forging friendships, and gaining personally and professionally while having fun.

The newly formed Sandhills Chapter of EWGA is supporting the event with volunteers for various functions as well as acting as the local host organization. The Sandhills EWGA welcomes new members

and encourages anyone interested in learning the game of golf, networking and just having fun to join. Membership information can be found at http://www.ewga.com/become_a_member/join_now/.

Group Sales Roundtable Meeting - First Meeting for 2010

The first area Group Sales Managers & Director of Sales round table meeting was held on February 25, 2010, at the Hampton Inn & Suites. The group shared ideas and options to increase group business including Sales Blitzes within North Carolina, supporting existing and new sporting events, government business and much more.

The date, time and location of the next meeting will be announced soon and is scheduled to take place at the Homewood Suites in Olmsted Village in April 2010.

Association Executives of NC - 2010 Annual Golf Tournament

The AENC Annual Golf Tournament on May 3rd will be hosted at Little River Golf & Resort. Over 150 Association Executives from across North & South Carolina are expected to attend the event. The event will begin on Monday, May 3rd with a 10:30 am Shotgun start on the Little River, Dan Maples designed course.

Other activities will also be offered including a tour of area attractions and a "Learn to Play Golf" clinic for AENC members and sponsors.

How the Recession has hit Meeting Planners Across the Board: Sector Analysis

The recession has had a wide-ranging effect on the meetings and events industry, but different sectors have had to face up to different challenges.

Not every sector has struggled in the face of the recession either. A 2009 survey by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) shows that the international associations sector plans to keep both its large and small meeting programs going, and that few events are being cancelled.

For a look at how four industries – automotive, financial services, professional services and healthcare – are managing the recession in terms of meetings and events, go to

http://meetingsreview.com/news/2010/02/24/How_the_recession_has_hit_meetings_planners_across_the_board

Meeting Planners See Signs of Economic Upswing

According to a recent Meetings Industry Association (MIA) study on the "real state of the economy," 100 percent of corporate and government planners surveyed said their organizations have begun to see signs of the economic recovery expected to end the recession. And 60 percent of all respondents, which include planners and suppliers, reported seeing signs of recovery in their own businesses.

The findings are a part of an ongoing series on the "Actual Impact of the Credit Crunch on the Conference and Events Market" conducted by the MIA, which measures industry performance by a

number of indicative factors and emerging trends, such as shortened lead times for planning meetings and events.

With industry professionals hopeful about an improving economy, the focus is shifting more towards value and meeting effectiveness, rather than heavily focusing on cost. A previous survey in the series revealed that as the economy recovers, 37.2 percent of respondents believe that increasing yield will be one of their greatest challenges; while 15.3 percent felt it would be achieving value for their clients' investment. However, 69.4 percent said their highest priority was delivering a high return on investment, specifically when selecting venues.

Who's coming to Town?

Moore County will be hosting the following meeting & convention groups in March & April 2010:

- SCC Emergency Services Meeting (Rescheduled due to snow)
- 60th NC State of the Benevolent Patriotic Order of Does
- 2010 South East Dealers Association Meeting
- 2010 Annual Meeting Real Property - NC Bar

Upcoming Meetings & Tradeshows

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

- MPI - Carolinas Chapter Meeting - March 18-19, 2010
- AENC Technology Showcase - April 16, 2010
- AENC Golf Tournament - May 3, 2010
- International Network of Golf - May 9-12, 2010

Sandhills Hospitality Association News & Views

The Sandhills Hospitality Association (SHA) held its March luncheon meeting at the Sandhills Community College Culinary Arts school. The lunch was a gourmet treat prepared and served by the students. Guest speaker, Kevin Brafford, from the NC Golf Panel provided information about the organization and how the NC Golf Courses are rated and become ranked as top 100 Golf Courses in the Tar Heel state. Kevin Brafford is executive director of the [North Carolina Golf Panel](#).

On The Move

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

- Matt Horvath, Golf Pro at Southern Pines Golf Club
- Destonie Peitz, General Manager, Sandhills Value Inn

- Fred Maenza, General Manager, Holiday Inn Express

Welcome to new businesses for our residents and visitors to enjoy.

- Hickory Tavern and Pretty N Bliss, Hwy 15-501, next to Comfort Inn, opening in April
- Maxi's Place, Village of Pinehurst, next to the Fillin' Station
- Deep River Coffee Company, Robbins, reopened in February

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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The Convention & Visitors Bureau for the Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen Area is an economic development organization and non-profit authority of Moore County, North Carolina. The CVB mission is to promote the area as a destination for visitors, meetings, conventions and tours, and is funded primarily by a three percent hotel / motel room occupancy tax paid by visitors to Moore County.

www.homeofgolf.com