

Home of American Golf®

Destination Marketing News

Your Tourism Industry Update from the Convention & Visitors Bureau

November/December 2007

TOURISM NEWS



Summer Success

While the changing leaves may signal transition to fall, and the move into the busier fall season for visitors in the Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen Area, this year the change is not quite as noticeable. Yes Mother Nature is playing a game on us again with the mild fall temperatures, but for the normal tourism summer slowdown - it just didn't happen. In fact, according to the latest figures from the Convention & Visitors Bureau, this year's summer was the strongest on record across the months of June through August. While the autumn visitors to the area are certainly welcome, the 2007 summer visitors left more than just an impression, and deposited record amounts of cash into the community.

One of the major ingredients of the recipe for the summer season success was the caliber and number of events that were held during the period.

- US Women's Open
- USTA League State Tennis Championships
- US Kid's Golf World Championships
- Jimmy V Celebrity Tournament

Records months exceed the prior best year total*:

- June (except for US Open years of 1999, 2005) by 41 %
- July by 18 %
- Aug by 8 %

*This marks a trend where summer tourism now accounts for over 30 percent of the total year's tourism revenues, where in the 1990's it was roughly 20 percent.

Moore County Joins Central Park NC Initiative

The three leading business advocate organizations in Moore County are joining the Central Park NC (CPNC) initiative, which is a regional, strategic, and economic development partnership created in 1994. Also called the Moore County Troika, the three economic development agencies in Moore County involved are; Partners in Progress, Moore County Chamber of Commerce, and Convention & Visitors Bureau. With

the addition of Moore County, Central Park NC will include 8 counties, including Rowan, Davidson, Randolph, Stanly, Montgomery, Anson, and Richmond Counties.

Paramount to the CPNC strategy is the geographic positioning of these counties relative to the state urban crescent that stretches from Charlotte, north and east to the Greensboro/Winston Triad, through the Research Triangle region and down to Fayetteville. The initiative emphasizes balanced growth and providing economic opportunities, many rooted in tourism, for the eight counties and the feeder markets in the urban crescent.

The area has long recognized that visitors do not see or care about county lines and thus adding logical connections to regional tourism assets makes will enhance the visitor experience. The CVB is eager to work side by side on these exciting new initiatives with neighboring counties via the strong leadership provided by NCCP.

American Vacations are Getting Shorter

According to the Travel Industry Association, Americans are taking shorter vacations, but more frequent vacations. The average length of stay has dropped from about five days in the 1980s to four days in the 1990s to less than 3.5 days now. The good news is since people are taking more frequent vacations, they can visit our area more often.

First PGA McGladrey Team Championship held at the Pinehurst Resort

The first grassroots nationwide best-ball Championship sanctioned by The PGA of America was held September 10-12 on Pinehurst courses Nos. 8, 2, and 6. This championship is the result of the new partnership between The PGA of America and RSM McGladrey, the official accounting, tax and business consulting firm of The PGA of America. The New England PGA section took home the honors. There were teams from 41 PGA sections representing 32 states.

In 2008, its second year, teams of four from across the country will compete in a series of qualifiers to vie for PGA section champion honors and the opportunity to play in the national championship at Pinehurst Resort in the fall. With a total purse of \$200,000 for professionals and amateurs, 41 four-person teams will play at Pinehurst September, 28 – October 1, 2008 on Pinehurst Nos. 2, 4 and 8.

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

CVB Winter Advertising Campaign to Launch

The CVB along with its new adverting agency, SMITH, will launch a winter advertising campaign beginning November 1, 2007 which will run through the end of February 2008. It is the first campaign of its kind in our area to target visitors during our winter months. A specific microsite, www.HisandHerGetaways.com, will provide the focal point for the specials listed by category. There will be His, Hers, Couples, and Holiday/Family specials. Area hotels, resorts, golf courses and packagers will offer unique themed packages for visitors to the microsite. The target markets for print, online, and outdoor advertising are Raleigh, Charlotte, and Greensboro.

New Consortium for Promoting Area Events

As part of an initiative to find ways of improving the promotion of area events, the CVB is spearheading the creation of a consortium of business leaders to find ways we can promote area events to more visitors, increase room nights, and encourage repeat visits to the area. Claire Phillips, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, will be scheduling a meeting in early November to gather ideas, suggestions, and viewpoints about what we can do to better manage and promote the calendar of events so that visitors can benefit from the many and varied activities we offer throughout the year. By creating a consortium, interested businesses can achieve more economies of scale, leverage similar events and offers to create multi-day visits, and highlight the historical, natural, and family-oriented amenities in Moore County. If you are interested in becoming a part of the consortium or have questions, please contact Claire at cphillips@ncrbiz.com.

Great Golf Deals

Published by the NC Golf Marketing Alliance, area golf courses, hotels, and packagers in the CVB Co-Op program are well-represented in the second issue of the Great North Carolina Golf Deals. This initiative was designed to leverage the wide range of golf in North Carolina and provide unique offerings to potential visitors in NC, VA, WV, OH, PA, and MD in addition to distribution at NC Welcome Centers and AAA offices in these regions. For a copy or more information contact the CVB. All offers are available online as well at www.greatnorthcarolinagolfdeals.com

Artful Thinking

The CVB is working closely with the Moore County Arts council on the creation of a new multi-day event for the area, designed to maximize the great arts and tourism draw that exists here. There will be some terrific ground-floor opportunities for tourism-related businesses to get involved with shaping this new initiative, so stay tuned!

Weekends-R-Us

There is a new destination-driven consumer website for the southeast launching in October/November and will go national in early 2008. The CVB is an inaugural destination partner. The content and links, attractions, restaurants, events and hotels (fee based) link off the area destination pages. This new website eliminates pop-ups, banner ads, etc. to make it a very "clean" user friendly website. See for yourself at www.weekendsrus.com

CVB Publications

The new Essentials Guide, new Destination Golf Guide, and the new Sandhills Style Magazine will all be released in January 2008. Thank you to Lisa Long, CVB Publications Manager, for getting these big projects completed with professionalism, style and on schedule.

Golf Show Schedule in Place

The CVB 2008 Golf Show schedule is as follows:

- Richmond, VA – Jan. 11-13
- Cincinnati, OH – Jan. 18-20
- Orlando, FL – Jan. 25-26
- Washington, D.C. – Feb. 1-3
- Chicago, IL – Feb. 8-10

Cleveland, OH – Feb. 15-17
Somerset, NJ – Feb.22-24
Toronto, Canada – Feb. 2-4
Philadelphia, PA – Feb.29 – Mar.2
Novi, MI – Mar. 7-9

New “Potters of Seagrove” Map and Guide

The new guide and map are now available at the NC Pottery Center in Seagrove. You can also request one from contact@DiscoverSeagrove.com. The CVB also has the new guides available in the lobby.

Room at the Inn

Yes Virginia, there will be “Room at the Inn” this year. The Pilot and CVB will again advertise local lodging options for visitors to the area during our busy holiday season. Contact the CVB for more information on how you can participate this year with this very successful program.

The Home of American Golf Featured in Various Publications / Media

The area received significant media coverage recently including:

- The Holly Arts and Crafts Festival was one of the featured segments on UNCTV’s “North Carolina Weekend” on October 20.
- Ads using various CVB co-op program participants will be featured in print and online in Golf Digest, Golf World, Golf Week, and Golf for Women through December
- “Where to Retire” magazine September/October 2007 features an article on Pinehurst & Southern Pines by Jim Kerr. (p. 136)

Lodging Management Information You can Use

Many accommodation facilities are participating in ADR & Occupancy reports that provide relevant analysis to the lodging industry in Moore County. These valuable reports provide pertinent data relative to market demand for long-term planning, renovations, additions, etc., along with a realistic projection for occupancy and average rate. It only takes a few minutes of time to provide your property data each month, and it is kept strictly confidential. Reports are in an aggregate format and are sent to participating properties only. If you are not currently participating and would like additional information, please contact Lucy Merkle 692-3330, x236. We encourage you to participate.

MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS



Why use the CVB to assist with planning your meeting?

According to an article found on MeetingNews.com there are several great reasons to use a CVB for planning a meeting, conference, or convention. Especially in an area such as ours with such a wide variety of venues, amenities, and activities, a CVB can be an invaluable resource for navigating the planning process whether planning a first-time event or recurring. As the landscape of options changes from year to year, the

CVB stays current on what you can offer your attendees. One director of meeting activities noted, “They act as an intermediary between the [group] and potential facilities and are a great resource for transportation, tours, and vendors.” A survey indicated that nearly 75% of the corporate planners who use CVBs said bureaus can suggest local venues and ideas they wouldn’t have know about otherwise. In other words, using a CVB can provide a one-stop shop to help your organization find the best venue for its requirements and assist with the other areas surrounding the success of a meeting.

Convention South – “Meeting Professionals to Watch in 2008”

CVB Director of Sales, Beverly Stewart, has been nominated as one of Convention South’s, “Meeting Professionals to Watch in 2008.” The magazine represents Meeting Planners, Suppliers, Destinations, etc. across the southeast. The nomination was submitted based on professional achievements and dedication to the meetings industry. Convention South designed this award to highlight professionalism and to help other readers benefit from the nominee experience in the meetings industry.

AENC Annual Tradeshow – December 13th, 2007 Raleigh, NC

The Convention & Visitors Bureau and five area hotels & resorts including the Hampton Inn & Suites, Homewood Suites by Hilton, Little River Golf Resort, Pine Needles-Mid Pines Resorts and The National will participate in Association Executives of NC – Annual Tradeshow, December 13th, 2007 in Raleigh, NC. This tradeshow is geared toward Association Executives throughout North Carolina and provides an excellent opportunity to showcase our area to the “Decision Makers.”

Meetings Co-op - Richmond, VA, Sales Blitz On Go

The third scheduled sales blitz in the meetings co-op is scheduled for November 12-15, 2007 in Richmond, VA. The Richmond Sales Blitz will include advertising in select publications, e-blast to meeting planners and other direct marketing techniques prior to the team members scheduling one-on-one appointments with planners.

Who’s Coming to Town?

Moore County will be hosting the following meeting & convention groups in November and December 2007:

- **Western Carolina University**
- **AAA Carolinas**
- **Focused Industrial Training**
- **North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives**

Meeting Planner gives CVB Sales Department - Thumbs Up!

“Few CVBs measure up to the high standards set by the Convention and Visitors Bureau of the Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen area. Beverly Stewart plays a significant role in our decision to bring the NC Bar Association programs to the Pinehurst, Southern Pines area. Whether my group is small or large, Bev works with me and the host facility to keep us coming back and makes us raving fans.”

Melissa L. Noderer
Assistant Director of the North Carolina Bar Foundation
Cary, NC

SPOTLIGHT ON AREA BUSINESSES



Henry's Gelato

Opened late September. Located at 10745 Hwy 15-501, Southern Pines (next to the Chamber of Commerce Building)

Bonasso's Pizzeria (formerly Nia's Pizzeria)

Opened in September. Located at 207 Morganton Road, Southern Pines.

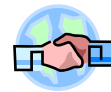
North Carolina Speedway – Rockingham

Andy Hillenburg, the new owner of the Rock, will be bringing lower-tiered racing events to the 250-acre track site. The races that should start in the fall of 2008 will bring much needed race-related tourism dollars back to the area. Start your engines.

Who's on First?

The *old* Hampton Inn will operate as a Best Western and the Sandhills Value Inn will operate in the old Best Western facility. The *new* Hampton Inn will open in December.

NEW INDUSTRY CONTACTS



A warm welcome to new staff that have accepted or moved into positions that have an impact on area tourism and hospitality:

- Claire Phillips, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Cheryl Ferguson, Vice President of Sales, Pinehurst Resort
- Teresa Mary Alesch, Director of Human Resources, Moore County
- Gary Barnum, Airport Manager, Moore County Regional Airport
- Rebecca Shifer, Woodlake
- Geneva Parker, Woodlake
- Shirley Stefnoski, Director of Sales, EconoLodge
- Danielle Byrd, Residence Inn, Director of Sales
- Brenda Dewberry, The Lodge at Sandhills
- Phyllis Staton, General Manager, Motel 6
- Claire Matthews, Events Coordinator, Moore County Chamber of Commerce
- Lakota Copeland, Administrative Assistant, Moore County Chamber of Commerce

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



Comfort Inn in Pinehurst, NC Wins 2007 Platinum Hospitality Award

For the second year in a row, the Comfort Inn, Pinehurst, NC has received the Platinum Hospitality Award from Choice Hotels International. In order to receive the award, the Comfort Inn met several thresholds for achieving guest satisfaction: high marks for cleanliness and property maintenance, low ratio of guest complaints, no more than one “unresponsive” guest complaint on record over the last year, the hotel met or exceeded Comfort Inn Standards and fulfilled its promises to consumers. Only two percent of the properties in the Choice Hotels system were awarded the exclusive Choice Platinum Award this year. Congratulations David Byers – GM.

Homewood Suites by Hilton Awarded “Highest Guest Satisfaction Among Extended Stay Hotel Chains” by J.D. Power and Associates for the Fifth Time in the Seven Year Old Segment

According to the study, Homewood Suites by Hilton brand received top ratings in five of seven key measure of guest experience with special attention in the following areas: check-in/check-out, guestroom, hotel services, hotel facilities, and costs & fees. The 2007 North America Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index Study is based on responses from 47,634 guests who stayed in a hotel between May 2006 and June 2007.

Pinehurst Resort wins “World’s Best Golf Resorts” Award

According to a reader survey by Travel + Leisure Golf magazine, Pinehurst Resort was chosen as the top ranked golf resort in the U.S.. This is Pinehurst’s second win of the award; it won in 2005. Second place went to Kiawah Island Golf Resort, SC and third place went to Pebble Beach Resorts, CA. Pinehurst Resort is the site of the 2008 U.S. Amateur and 2014 U.S. Open Championships. The award was presented by John Atwood, Travel + Leisure Golf editor-in-chief on October 18th.

Forest Creek Recognized in Golf Week and Golf Digest’s Top 50 Golf Courses 2007

Designed by Tom Fazio and named the North Course, the second course at Forest Creek was ranked #16 in the just released top 50 New Golf Courses for 2007 in Golf Week magazine and was also ranked #14 in the Fall 2007 issue of Golf Digest of America’s 50 Best Modern Golf Clubs. Forest Creek is an exclusive private golf course community in Southern Pines near Sandhills Community College and just minutes from the Village of Pinehurst. The gated community has also been recognized by Golf Week as one of the top 30 residential courses (North and South courses) and as a Top 100 best Modern Course.

HAVE A HAPPY AND SAFE HOLIDAY SEASON