

Destination Marketing News

Your Tourism Industry Update - October 2009

Produced by the
Convention & Visitors Bureau



Tourism News

Legislation for Government Per Diem Rates

As many of you in the lodging industry are aware, Moore County has been placed at a disadvantage in terms of government per diem rates for lodging as it does not have a specific rate assigned to the county as compared to Cumberland and 15 other counties in North Carolina. What this means is we are dropped in with the other counties in the state and assigned an artificially low per diem rate, which makes it difficult for many of the local properties to offer a rate that makes economic sense, and in the end, the county loses out on important tourism business and revenues from this growing sector.

The CVB has been working diligently with area hotels to get this changed, but to date has not been able to work through federal government red tape to affect a change. That may be changing soon, due to some good work being done by our Congressman Howard Coble.

Working from a request from the CVB, H.R. 3934 was created by Rep. Coble and was dropped on Oct. 27th. It would require GSA to review the rates on a biennial basis. The language was crafted to include Moore County. The bill would not force GSA to change any specific rate; however it would allow hotels and conference centers in a similar situation as Moore County to be able to present their case for a change in the per-diem rate. The bill will get referred to the appropriate committee. Yes, the bill approval process can take some time, but we feel this bill has a good chance for approval, and we are indebted to the Congressman for his help. Stay tuned!

Chinese Delegation Visits, Talks Tourism

What do Moore County, North Carolina and the Hunan Province, China have in common? History and Tourism. Let's explain. First the history lesson. A fallen soldier, Lt. Robert Hoyle Upchurch of Moore County, who was recently identified by DNA after missing in action in WW II, was last seen flying his P40 near the mountains in Hunan

Province. After his recent identification his remains were returned and reburied in his home town of High Falls. Villagers in Guidong Village in Hunan buried the unidentified body 63 years ago and honored him as a hero, and now it is one who has a name and home town.

As a result of these actions, a new relationship has been forged between these regions. Thanks to North Carolina Representative Harris Blake who has worked tirelessly to create this mutual understanding, recently arranged for a high ranking official to visit Moore County and other regions of our state. Executive Vice Governor Laishan Yu's time spent here may soon open even more doors, as he agreed to begin the process of crafting a formal agreement on tourism that will benefit both regions. In the Vice Governor's own words, "I think the two states - North Carolina and Hunan - have many similarities as well as complimentary aspects, and both have rich resources for tourism. Both are very beautiful, like paradise, and we can start from that."

National Travel Promotion Act Moves Along

The Travel Promotion Act moved closer to becoming law when the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the bipartisan, common sense legislation by a vote of 358-66. The Senate last month passed, by a vote of 79-19, an identical bill, which would create a public-private partnership to promote the United States as a premier international travel destination and communicate U.S. security and entry policies. That vote is expected soon, and President Obama is expected to sign the bill into law.

The Travel Promotion Act will for the first time create a U.S. promotion and communications program to send a more welcoming message to international travelers. Estimates by Oxford Economics suggest a well-executed travel promotion program could result in up to \$4 billion in additional travel spending and 1.6 million new visitors.

NC Division of Tourism Shows Continuous Improvement on VisitNC.com

The Division's commitment to continuous improvement across all its programs is reflected most recently by an important enhancement to the keyword search on VisitNC.com. To improve prospective visitors' experience on VisitNC.com and further grow downstream traffic for partners, now whenever users type in city or town names in the keyword search, the appropriate local visitor bureaus (CVB/chamber/TDA) are now highlighted at the top of the search results, giving visitors an immediate option to get local information in addition to driving traffic to partner sites.

NC Division of Tourism Radio Campaign Highlights Golf

The Division of Tourism, Film & Sports Development's fall marketing campaign ran September 15-October 22 in Atlanta, Greenville/Spartanburg, Knoxville, Richmond,

Roanoke, Norfolk/Tidewater and DC. Part of the program includes the production of 8 non-traditional radio commercials that will rotate in each of the markets. The intent is to have North Carolinians share stories about distinctively North Carolina experiences or memories. A similar flight is planned for the spring.

For golf, the division interviewed both Ron Green Sr. and Jr. (Charlotte Observer sports and golf writers) and have enough fun stories to produce several different spots. The first relates what may be a familiar story about noted amateur Billy Joe Patton competing in the North and South Amateur. The CVB has included one of the spots on it's website at www.homeofgolf.com.

Golf World Readers Include Several in NC among Favorites in 2010 Rankings

Golf World magazine has released the results of its, "Readers' Choice Rankings: the Top 50 Resort Courses" and three NC courses are among the list. Two favorites from the Home of American Golf® that made the list were Pinehurst Resort in Pinehurst ranked #8, and Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club in Southern Pines ranked #30. For the "Top 50 Public Courses," Tobacco Road in Sanford ranked #4.

In a Web exclusive, North Carolina had 41 courses score 75 or better. See www.golfdigest.com/golfworld/2009/09/golf_readers_choice_states?currentPage=4

Cypress Bend Vineyard's Campbell Took N.C. Muscadine Cup for Best Muscadine

The 10th Annual N.C. State Fair Wine Competition, held Oct. 7-8 in Raleigh, had 416 wines submitted by 51 N.C. wineries. Childress Vineyards, in Lexington, took home the N.C. Winegrowers Cup and Best of Show honors with its 2006 Cabernet Franc.

Cypress Bend Vineyards, in Wagram, took the N.C. Muscadine Cup for best Muscadine wine for its Campbell. Biltmore Winery, in Asheville, led the medal count with 42 awards. To find out more, visit the Wine & Grapes Industry Awards page at ncommerce.com

Bear Creek Trails in Robbins

Bear Creek trails in Robbins are a favorite of walkers and paddlers alike. The creek that surrounds the town is lined with leafy growth, rocky points, slightly deep ravines and areas where you can step right down to the waters edge. It has beautiful scenery with overhanging trees, large boulders and bends in the waterway. Public access for canoeing is available.

The Bear Creek walking trail leads to a huge reservoir with wild ducks, otters, hawks and many other creatures that inhabit the area. The reservoir offers glimpses of the water through tree lined paths. There are also wide open spaces surrounding the

reservoir, perfect for camping, star gazing or bird watching. Check out www.townofrobbins.com

Marketing & Public Relations

CVB Debuts New “Must Have” Walking Tour Book in November

The CVB, working in partnership with the Tufts Archives, will unveil what should prove to be a very popular guide for guests to the area: “*The Village of Pinehurst: An Historic Walking Tour.*” The 136 page, hard-bound covered book features 58 key historic buildings (residential and commercial) in the village, complete with architectural description, historic overview, detailed color-coded maps, and past and present photography of each structure. The tour is broken down into five walking routes and one driving route, making it easier for users to customize their tours.

Each route is color coded and takes its name from the promenade road featured in that grouping, including: Magnolia Route, Cherokee Route, Dogwood Route, Village Green Route, and Perimeter Route (driving). Perfect for visitors and as a VIP gift, the books will go on sale in November for \$17.00 each, with special volume wholesale pricing available to area retailers, hotels, resorts and golf courses. A portion of the proceeds will go to Tufts Archives.

The CVB would like to thank Audrey Moriarty, Executive Director of Tufts Archives, and her staff for their irreplaceable role as editors on this project. Due to a limited print run it is suggested bulk orders be placed in advance of printing by contacting Laurel Stanell at the CVB 692-3330, ext. 242.

Partnering to Maximize E-Communications

The CVB, in conjunction with SMITH Advertising is piloting an e-blast program with a group of its marketing co-op partners to drive new travel and increase the number of email inquiries for program participants. There were a series of three e-blasts to two databases promoting one of three packages designed to attract visitors. One e-blast is designed for shoppers, another is for golfers, and the third is for couples. In learning more about what consumers are looking for, more targeted marketing campaigns can be developed.

Co-op Partnership Yields Strong Results

New to last year’s CVB Co-op Program was the addition of the state’s interactive golf website golf.visitnc.com. Co-op partners were featured individually in the CVB’s destination section and received substantial direct exposure and website links activity

as a result. The most recent report shows the following activity for our destination as a result of our destination presence on this site.

- The 23 participating golf courses (via CVB Co-op) collectively realized 23,809 views and 7,025 click thrus for the first 9 months of 2009.
- For the 16 lodging properties and packagers, they benefited from the 26,037 views and 14,754 click thrus collectively over the same time period.

If you are interested in knowing the total specifically attributed to your property, or about any aspect of the CVB Co-op Program, please contact Claire Phillips at the CVB.

Room at the Inn Program 2009

As part of The Pilot newspaper's interest in giving back to the community it serves, the eighth annual, "Room at the Inn" program will begin running November 13, 2009 through January 4, 2010. As in the past, area lodging properties are invited to provide value rates to residents who have guests coming to town and need extra sleeping quarters for the holidays. The Pilot generously provides print and online advertising throughout the season and looks forward to another successful year working with the CVB and area lodging properties.

CVB Digital Photo Library Expanded

Along with the design of the 2010 Destination Guide, a new series of digital photos were taken by NC photographer, Chip Henderson. Chip spent several days in the area capturing the traditional and contemporary sights of Pinehurst, Southern Pines, and Aberdeen. The series is expanding the visual impact of the area to increase consumer awareness of the additional amenities and beauty the area has to offer. The CVB will be using the new images in upcoming marketing projects as well as with writers and media requests.

6th Annual Hickory Open - Play Mid Pines Just as Donald Ross Intended

Step back in history and see what golf was really like in the golden era. Mid Pines will soon host the 6th Annual Mid Pines Hickory Open on November 6-8, 2009.

Competitors from all over the country and even across the pond come to play on a Donald Ross Masterpiece as he would have played it using golf clubs primarily from the 20's, and dress in period clothing: plus fours, ties, sweaters and jackets. Enjoy three days of golf, great food, a golf collectables trade show, awards luncheon on the final day, and lots of fun.

All are welcome. Mid Pines can supply hickory-shafted clubs and provide pointers for their use. Left handed? We have clubs for you too, and don't forget your classic

clothing. For reservations, please call 910-692-9362 or e-mail
Graham.Gilmore@RossResorts.com

2010 Official Destination & Golf Guide to be Unveiled in December

The CVB will be releasing the 2010 Official Destination & Golf Guide in late December. Along with Pace Communications out of Greensboro, the new guide was developed to include more content similar to a magazine with suggestions for travelers and more in-depth information about the area's amenities. New photography is included in the new publication. The guide is distributed at all consumer shows the CVB attends, is available at all NC visitor centers, and an online version is available on www.homeofgolf.com.

Meetings & Conventions

Fall and Winter Meeting Specials

In October the CVB sales department collected Meetings Specials for Fall & Winter - 2009/2010 from area meeting properties. Several properties responded to the request and the information has been posted on the meetings section of the CVB web site at <http://www.homeofgolf.com/meetings/home/specials.htm>. The Meeting Specials will also be emphasized in an upcoming Meetings E-Newsletter to planners.

Area Meeting Facilities to be Promoted at the Association Executives of NC Annual Trade Show

The CVB along with Little River Golf & Resort, National Golf Club and Mid Pines-Pine Needles Resorts, will be exhibiting at the Association Executives of NC - Annual Tradeshow in Raleigh, December 10, 2009.

Representatives will be meeting with association executives, corporate planners and others to promote their facilities and the Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen Area for meetings, golf groups and special events.

Military-Government Business

SCC Small Business Center and the Small Business & Technology Development Center will be providing a free seminar on November 12, 2009, on the basics of Proposal Writing and the basics of Government Contracting combined with how companies can search the Internet for bids, forecasts, set up search agents in Federal Biz Ops and award history info. The seminar will be held at 103 Van Dusen Hall from 9 am - noon.

If you are interested in participating in the seminar please contact Beverly Stewart at bstewart@ncrrbiz.com or Marilyn Neely at neelym@sandhills.edu.

2010 AENC Golf Outing Coming to Little River Golf & Resort

The 2010 AENC Annual Golf Outing will be held at Little River Golf & Resort on May 3, 2010. This event is expected to bring over 150 Association Executives, Suppliers and other guests to the area. The tournament will begin with a shot-gun start at 10:00 am and will include a clinic for non-golfers and an area tour. The event will end with a reception and entertainment for guests.

AMEX Expects Rise in Meetings Held in 2010

Following weakened demand this year, American Express Business Travel expects pent up need for travel and meetings to be unleashed in 2010. This increased demand will likely cause rates to slightly increase in most travel categories by the end of 2010, according to the American Express Global Business Travel Forecast, released Wednesday. The forecast also reports companies will have more formal oversight of their meeting planning and meeting spending in 2010. In addition, companies are expected to loosen purse strings on events and conferences, with potential in-roads by travel category managers adopting strategic meeting management programs. Overall business travel growth is predicted to be up 1% for the U.S (www.BTN.com, 9/30; www.MiMegasie.com, 9/30; www.OrlandoSentinel.com, Business).

Meeting Planner Gives CVB Sales Department - Thumbs Up!

"Bev, you were the best host and I loved learning about the Pinehurst, Southern Pines area. They picked the right one when they chose you for your job. Once again, thank you so much for your hospitality this weekend."

Ruby Williamson
Campbell Soup Supply Company L.L.C.

Who's Coming to Town?

Moore County will be hosting the following meeting & convention groups in November & December 2009:

- National Advertising Golf Association
- NC Department of Agriculture
- NC Bar Association
- American Contract Bridge League

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 - November 19-20, 2009
- AENC Tradeshow - December 10, 2009

Convention & Visitors Bureau Staff:

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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