

Destination Marketing News (DMN)

Moore County's Tourism Industry Update

February/March 2015

Produced by the Convention & Visitors Bureau



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Tourism News

Welcome Visitors and Hospitality Partners to 2015!

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Each year the CVB publishes an annual report which provides an excellent summary of our community's destination marketing/management activities, successes and upcoming challenges/opportunities. The report is produced in-house and will be available by the first week of February at homeofgolf.com or a printed version can be obtained by contacting the CVB directly.

SPORTS COMPLEX UPDATE

As will be reported in the Pilot Newspaper this week, the CVB is working closely with Moore County's Partners in Progress (Economic Development) on the potential development of a new sports complex in Aberdeen that would host amateur sporting events. The complex would drive new tourism business for the county. The first stage of the project involved negotiating a land option agreement with the land owners prior to conducting an in-depth feasibility study. With the land option agreement now in place, the CVB is working with the Town of Aberdeen on securing a contract for feasibility services that will be conducted and concluded by this summer. Stay tuned for more information on this exciting development.

THE PILOT PURCHASES BUSINESS NC MAGAZINE (excerpt from the Pilot newspaper)

Founded in 1981, the monthly magazine, which has a statewide -circulation of about 27,500, *BusinessNC* has won more than 100 national awards and was named the country's best regional business magazine in 2012. A new Pilot subsidiary, Old North State Magazines LLC, is buying it from David Kinney, Red Hand Media's manager and the magazine's editor in chief, and his son, Ben, its publisher.

The magazine comes with "great journalistic integrity," said Pilot Publisher David Woronoff, who worked there from 1991 to 1996 in several roles. "I know, trust and respect both David and Ben. We know what we're getting. That familiarity made the negotiations very amicable."

Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

CHANGES ON THE CVB BOARD

The CVB is pleased to announce the appointment of Claire Borneman, GM at Homewood Suites by Hilton, as the newest member of the CVB Board. She brings an impressive resume in the hospitality industry to her new role, and will be counted on as the CVB continues to build the destination brand and expand the destination product in Moore County. Claire replaces a very popular and respected leader in the industry - Ken Crow whose term ended in December. While his service at the CVB may have ended, Ken continues to be involved in a number of other

community boards and activities, which for those who know him is no surprise at all. Thanks to both for their service and leadership!

2014 US OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS IMPACT

As reported in prior DMN editions, work has been ongoing in determining the full impact of the 2014 US Open Championships held last June. A consortium of organizations including the USGA, CVB, and NC State University started well before the events took place to develop a comprehensive survey and study for this purpose. Heading up the research component was Dr. Gene Brothers at NCSU using key data sets from the USGA surveys via a state-of-the-art kiosk system. The final result of these efforts is expected to be released by the end of the month, and the CVB will publish a special edition of the DMN to disseminate this information.

VETS-HELP PLANS TO BUY ROCKINGHAM SPEEDWAY, FORMER NASCAR TRACK

A nonprofit veterans' assistance group has unveiled a grand vision for the future of Rockingham Speedway. The organization, Vets-Help, plans to buy the former NASCAR track from owners Andy Hillenburg and Bill Silas. The owners are working to sell the speedway by March 15 to avert a foreclosure by Farmers & Merchants Bank, which holds about \$4.2 million in loans against the property.

Vets-Help wants to host a series of disabled veterans' races at The Rock. Not only will the group maintain and operate the speedway, executive director Craig Northacker said, but it plans to build a residential complex for veterans returning from the war, complete with assisted and independent living, a medical center and an economic development center on the 244-acre speedway property. The program will also feature PTSD counseling for veterans and their families, Northacker said.

CVB VOLUNTEERS TAKE A TOUR OF ABERDEEN AND LEARN WHAT'S IN STORE FOR 2015

Fourteen attendees visited the Union Station Railroad Museum and Aberdeen High School Museum. Model trains ran in the Union Station building. The tour continued to Malcolm Blue Farm's newest exhibits and enjoyed refreshments from The Bakehouse and Cactus Creek Gourmet Coffee Roasters in the Postmaster's House. Transportation and historical tour was provided by Kirk Tours.

New for Aberdeen in 2015:

- NCDOT grant awarded to create a crosswalk/median connecting Aberdeen Lake Park to downtown
- Marriott Towneplace Suites to be constructed – 90 rooms – extended stay
- New family-friendly park at the corner of Saunders Blvd. and Bethesda Rd.

The CVB is also partnering with Pinecrest High School and Sandhills Community College to create a volunteer internship program. CVB volunteer intern(s) will start in the Spring semester 2015.

Marketing & Public Relations

2015 OFFICIAL VISITORS GUIDE IS AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION!

The CVB, in partnership with CompassMedia for the second year, published the 2015 Official Visitors Guide for Moore County. The lifestyle-type magazine includes fresh photography and stories that residents as well as guests will enjoy. The guide is distributed at consumer and trade shows, NC visitor centers throughout the state, local businesses, key events in Moore county, and it is available online which makes the publication virtually global. The theme for this year's guide is "Deeper Connections" which amplifies the scenic beauty, friendly people, and experiential nature of the destination. The guide is available now for you to use and enjoy. It is an annual publication with 60,000 printed copies.

<http://www.homeofgolf.com/visitor-guide-order-form>

2015 GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON TOURISM AT THE PINEHURST RESORT

While you're inside keeping warm, register now for the N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism, March 8-10 at Pinehurst Resort's Carolina Hotel in Pinehurst. There's no better opportunity to network with more than 500 of the state's tourism industry leaders and gain insights into North Carolina's growing travel industry. Registration is now available online. Save with an additional discount of \$25 per person for three or more attendees from the same

organization. Book your room at the resort by Feb. 23 and mention the N.C. Governor's Conference for the group rate. While in town for the Governor's Conference, be sure to take some time and find out for yourself why Pinehurst and the area are home to so many champions! <http://www.ncgovconf.com/registration>

The conference program includes experts in mobile marketing, public relations, cultural heritage tourism, legislative affairs, sports event marketing, film, international and market research. The conference program's educational sessions will be complemented by an issues forum, a preview of the Division's 2015-16 strategic marketing plan and co-op opportunities, and valuable interaction with peers and media partners. Prospective conference sponsors should contact Heidi Walters (919) 447-7762 to learn more about sponsorship opportunities.

GOLF MARKETING CO-OP TO LAUNCH WITH VISITNC.COM IN THE SPRING

In order to draw more attention and include surrounding counties to promote a larger region as a golf destination, working with Moore and Lee County, the CVB and www.visitnc.com are collaborating to create a digital campaign targeting the frequent golfer for 2015 spring and summer season. The goal of the program is to drive more interest and bookings downstream to participating golf courses. The campaign will be using offers from a few interested courses and will function as a pilot program that will hopefully gain traction with other golf facilities and broaden the definition of a golf destination in central (piedmont) North Carolina.

CVB MARKETING CO-OP PROGRAM IN DEVELOPMENT FOR FY '15-'16

The CVB will be releasing an RFP in early February to solicit responses from vendors for marketing and advertising services for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2015 and runs through June 30, 2016. The newly designed co-op program will be introduced to potential partners in late March. Options include print, digital, cable television, radio and mobile advertising. The program is successful because it allows businesses to augment their marketing budgets and direct attention specifically to their business. For more information, contact Claire Phillips, Director of Marketing.

Meetings & Conventions/Facilities & Renovations

2014 COLLABORATE INDUSTRY LEADERS – CVB DIRECTOR OF SALES RECOGNIZED

CVB Director of Sales Beverly Stewart was recognized by Collaborate Magazine as one of 21 meetings-industry leaders nationwide in its December/January 2015 edition. The magazine named corporate meeting professionals that are proven leaders in relationship building, one of the most important traits for influencers in the field. The honorees chosen, despite their different job responsibilities, career paths and places of work, are noted by the editors as visionary, insightful and knowledgeable in the magazine's special section. The current edition is now available in newsstands, and is delivered to more than 70,000 high-level business decision-makers six times per year.

MOORE COUNTY IS AWARDED THE DIXIE GIRLS SOFTBALL WORLD SERIES IN 2015

Moore County and the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) recently announced that Moore County, NC, has been awarded the Dixie Girls Softball (DSI) World Series for 2015. The event will be held at Hillcrest Park in Carthage, NC, August 7-13, and will generate as many as 2,000 visitors to the area – players, coaches, officials, and family members. Previous host communities have realized a significant economic impact as a result of hosting the Dixie Girls Softball World Series with attendee spending, ranging from \$3.5 - \$4 million.

RUGGED MANIAC 5K OBSTACLE RACE ON MARCH 16, 2105

Runners, mudders, and thrill-seekers from around North Carolina will brave the wildest and muddiest of ways around the obstacle course. Runners will jump over fire, crawl through underground tunnels, rocket down a 50ft. slide, and bounce on trampolines as they make their way through the 5k layout at Rockingham Dragway.

The CVB is working with the Rugged Maniac team to secure room rates in Moore County for the participants. For more info please visit www.ruggedmaniac.com.

HAMPTON INN & SUITES ANNIVERSARY AND RENOVATIONS

The Hampton Inn & Suites Southern Pines/Pinehurst is celebrating its 8th anniversary this year. As part of ongoing renovations to keep the property in tip-top shape, a project to replace hallway carpets on all floors was completed. Carpet was also replaced in the 3,300 sq. ft. ballroom and pre-function area. Last year the, "Perfect Mix Lobby" was introduced for the lobby and breakfast areas. Visit the Hampton Inn & Suites and, "Feel the Hamptonality"!

TOP SIX MEETING TRENDS FOR 2015

While there is no crystal ball for meetings in 2015, Successful Meetings analyzed various data and spoke with industry experts, meeting gurus, and on-the-ground organizers to get a sense of what planners can expect in the coming year. Read on to discover their top six trends for 2015. <http://www.successfulmeetings.com/Strategy/Case-Studies/Top-6-Meetings-Trends-for-2015/?cid=eltrMtgNews>

DESTINATION HOTELS REVEALS 2015 TRENDS IN THE THIRD ANNUAL ‘STATE OF THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY’ SURVEY

In its third annual "State of the Meetings Industry" survey of more than 185 meeting planners nationwide, Destination Hotels sheds light on the recent trends affecting the planning and execution of meetings and events. As the largest operator of independent hotels and resorts in North America, Destination asked an experienced group of corporate, association, government and independent planners—55 percent of whom control more than \$100,000 per year in direct meeting spend for their organizations—about how their planning duties and their meetings themselves are changing. These changes stem from general macroeconomic trends, the continued strength of the hospitality industry in particular, attendees' evolving needs and preferences, advancing technology, and other factors. Here is a summary of the survey results, plus front-line analysis. <http://www.hospitalitynet.org/news/4068183.html>.

PINEHURST COUNTRY CLUB AND RESORT

Ground has been broken to start building a \$4.2 million pool complex to help the club grow and sustain its membership for decades. Once the pool complex is finished in May, a fitness center will be constructed that will be attached to the tennis center. The facility will be available only for Pinehurst members.

For resort guests, a portion of the pro shop will be converted to a new pub called, “The Deuce.” The pub will have comfortable indoor and outdoor seating that will accommodate 80 to 140 people, feature NC craft beers and a unique resort menu. The renovation should be completed by summer. All this and a \$1 million renovation for the former National Golf Club that is now Pinehurst No. 9!

MCLENDON HILLS BUILDING A COVERED RIDING ARENA TO OPEN MAY 2015

McLendon Hills residents have many amenities to savor, from the expansive riding trails and equestrian center, Lake Troy Douglas and the nearby golf mecca of Pinehurst. But one amenity expansion will separate McLendon Hills from the rest. In partnership with two truly committed residents the Equestrian Center is about to see a unique expansion...a Covered Riding Arena! This facility will measure 80’ x 175’ and truly separate the equestrian offerings at McLendon Hills from other equestrian communities.

With a covered facility of this size McLendon Hills residents will be able to ride comfortably in almost any weather condition. Plus, with the planned synthetic footing material our new arena will allow our Equestrians to have a consistent and optimal riding base. Construction will begin in early 2015 with an estimated completion date in May.

Who’s Meeting in Moore County?

Moore County will be hosting the following meeting & convention groups in February & March 2015:

- Institute of Government
- Construction Professionals of NC
- 2015 Governor's Conference on Tourism
- Small Business Center Network

Upcoming Meetings & Tradeshows

- SC Society of Association Executives – Tradeshaw January
- Meeting Professionals Intl. Carolinas Chapter – Jan/March
- Association Executives of NC - Government Affairs Symposium February

Check it out – New Places and Things to Do

Take time to visit and try these new and soon-to-open businesses in the area. Let your guests know about the new additions to their Sandhills' experience. Additional information can be found at www.HomeOfGolf.com. Check out the specials and events calendar. The **free** Mobile App is another great way to find all things Sandhills as well. Apple and Android devices – look for, “Visit Pinehurst NC.”

- Buggy Town Coffee Shoppe, Carthage
- Lilly Pulitzer, Southern Pines (Opening March 2015)

On the Move for Tourism in Moore County

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

- Severine Utiger – Sales Manager at Homewood Suites by Hilton
- Howard Cannon – GM, Beacon Ridge Country Club
- Bob Knudsen – Managing Partner, Bonefish Grill
- Carol Hogan – Director of Sales, SpringHill Suites by Marriott
- Gary Crabb – Golf Package Sales, SpringHill Suites by Marriott
- Kathy Beveridge – Events & Membership Director, CCWP and Foxfire
- David Byers – GM at Comfort Inn appointment to Comfort Inn Board

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 kdavis@homeofgolf.com

SALE -- 20% discount in February. If you're looking for a great gift idea, the “Village of Pinehurst – Walking Tour” book is 136 pages of great information and photographs of the village then and now for just \$14.40. If you would like to purchase the coffee-table style book, please contact Karen Davis at the CVB to order. It is also available at the Given Library in the Village of Pinehurst.

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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