

Footprints & Paddledrips

The newsletter of the Georgia Nature-Based Tourism Association

Vol. 2 No. 3

April 2000

Special Presentations by Dr. Phyllis Isley At Next Business Meeting

You are cordially invited to attend the next informative meeting of the Georgia Nature-Based Tourism Association May 16, 2000 in Baxley. Come early for fellowship and refreshments from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. The business meeting will be from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. Our distinguished speaker will be Dr. Phyllis Isley, Director of the Bureau of Business Research and Economic Development at Georgia Southern University. Dr. Isley will speak on the Regional ICAPP (Intellectual Capital Assets Partnership Program) grant program from 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. After lunch, Dr. Isley will speak at 1:00 p.m. on the Economic Impact of Nature-Based Tourism.

This event will take place at the A. Randall Tuten Environmental Park/Outdoor Classroom covered amphitheatre at the Appling County Middle School.

Directions:

From the center of Baxley at Courthouse Square, follow US 1 (Main Street) South. Turn left on Highway 15. The Park and Middle School will be on your left, approximately 3 miles. Turn onto the gravel road by the Park sign next to the

Middle School. Please park outside the gates unless handicapped.

Bring your mug! Don't forget to bring your coffee mug to association meetings to enjoy our early morning coffee and talk time! By providing your own mug at each meeting, you will help eliminate the use of Styrofoam, a major polluter of the environment.

Bring your business cards and brochures to meetings to introduce yourself to fellow business owners, visitor center reps, chambers of commerce, and others. Use this opportunity to network with others who can help send business your way!

We are collecting media coverage, photos, and other news and event information for an association scrapbook that will be available for viewing at the general meeting. Send items of interest to the post office box or bring them to a meeting.

Playing catch-up! Apologies for the belated newsletter from GNTA's interim newsletter editor! It wasn't the ILOVEYOU virus that brought our computer low, it was a relative of the Melissa virus known as Story.gen or Jack-In-the-Box that destroyed our previous newsletter attempt and almost destroyed two months worth of proposal work. We hope this serves as a reminder to our friends, as we all become increasingly dependent upon our computers for our business and personal lives: remember to backup ALL your files! Backups saved an important proposal, but I had neglected to make backups of the newsletter and it was lost completely. Be very careful about opening attachments, even from

trusted sources. The virus apparently infected us through a canoe club mailing list, but we'll never know for sure. And keep your anti-virus software updated!

We are okay now, so please send newsletter submissions to swampman@gloryroad.net - it's safe.
- Chip Campbell

Recent Association Meetings

The February meeting was held at Coastal Encounters Nature Center on St. Simon's Island. Director Cate Tobler gave a personal tour of the site and described the variety of environmental education courses offered there. Additional highlights were learning about loggerhead sea turtles from Georgia Graves, examining the various aquarium creatures, including Dylan the baby loggerhead, and exploring a salt marsh.

The March meeting was held at the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal Museum and Nature Center south of Savannah. Nancy Reed hosted the event. After examining the artifacts on display in the museum, the meeting participants were given a walking tour along the canal banks by Miles Pinckney and Jerry Williamson. New spring greenery, delicate wildflowers, and singing birds formed a most enjoyable backdrop to the lecture about the historic waterway connecting the Savannah and Ogeechee Rivers.

Both of these wonderful South Georgia sites provide a unique learning experience. All who participated repeat their "thank you's" to Cate and Nancy for inviting the Association to their respective areas.

Earth Kinship 2000 Conference

Sheila Willis and Chip Campbell attended the Earth Kinship 2000 Conference in early February in Jacksonville, Florida where they represented the Georgia-Nature Based Tourism Association. The featured presenter was Sister Miriam MacGillis, whose thought-provoking lectures were built around the conference theme of "Coming Home: Discovering Our Sense of Place". Additional speakers offered several short sessions that explored aspects of that topic in-depth, with a final panel discussion of the issues raised in the classes. Other activities included fire ceremonies, audio-visual shows and music. On display throughout the weekend were exhibits from those who share a common interest in celebrating and protecting the natural beauty and culture of our region. Sheila and Chip prepared a display table featuring the special areas of South Georgia and made GNTA members' brochures available. They also collected informational literature for the Association library.

The Georgia Nature-Based Tourism Association extends its thanks to those members who contributed to the development of the GNTA booth, especially Obediah's Okefenok' and Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. Kudos to the non-members who answered the call: The Nature Conservancy, The Georgia Department of Natural Resources Non-Game Division, and Libbo Belger. Special gratitude is extended to Ray and Jody Hetchka of Kayak Amelia, who provided lodging.

Web Site Designer Chosen

The Web Site Committee announces that Lenz Design and Communications has been selected to develop the Georgia Nature-Based Tourism Association's Web site. The Decatur-based company was chosen after a careful review of various proposals. In addition to designing Web sites for a number of other organizations, this well-known corporation has produced quality books, brochures, and other informational material. They are responsible for the Natural Georgia series ("Georgia Wildlife") of the Georgia Wildlife Federation that includes issues devoted to the many scenic areas of the state. South Georgia titles include *Barrier Islands and The Okefenokee Swamp*. Another example of their work is *The Longstreet Highroad Guide to the Georgia Coast & Okefenokee*. According to Pam Holliday, Creative Manager, "Lenz Design understands the business of nature-based tourism, and we share your conservation ethic."

During the next few months, the Web Site Committee will be working with the North Georgia company on the creation of an effective site for the Association. Basic guidelines have already been established and services include a home page, resource map, calendar of events, news and resource information, member applications, and e-mail responses. There will be free links for Association members and a page may be purchased for a nominal fee. Details on how to prepare and submit member information will be presented at future meetings and in the newsletter. Lenz Design and Communications is located at 119 East Court Square, Suite 201, Decatur, GA 30030. Phone: (404) 573-2021 and e-mail: Lenz_Design@msn.com.

Membership Drive

If you know anyone who would be interested in joining the Georgia Nature-Based Tourism Association, contact Lynn Carter with the information. Lynn's number is 912-367-7731 and her e-mail is lscarter@applingdacoc.com.

Send Us Your Events

If you have any events that would be of interest to association members, send them to the P.O. Box for publication in upcoming newsletters and on the web site.

Fall Suwannee River Trip

At the May meeting we will discuss tentative plans for another fall canoe excursion. At this time, the Suwannee River, which leaves the Okefenokee near Fargo, is the favored location, as the outing would serve to promote awareness of an Atlantic-To-The-Gulf paddle trail route. These outings are part of GNTA's efforts to heighten public interest in the value of our scenic rivers and to promote the non-consumptive uses of our environment for the benefit of local communities.

Two Trips on the Altamaha

On Saturday, June 3, the Baxley-Appling County Board of Tourism will host a trip on the Altamaha River near Baxley. For more information, call 912-367-7731. On Saturday, June 10, the Hazlehurst-Jeff Davis County Board of Tourism will host a trip on the Ocmulgee and Altamaha

Rivers. For more information, call 912-375-4543.

Member News

Area festivals successful This spring many South Georgia GNTA members hosted annual festivals. Reporting successful events were Lynn Carter (Baxley-Applying County Board of Tourism) - "Baxley Tree Fest" and "Ditchwater Jazz & Blues Fest"; Vicki Leverette (Waycross Tourism Bureau) - "Pogofest"; and Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge - "National Wildlife Week".

Carl Glenn, Suwannee Canal Recreation Area concessionaire, is recovering from heart surgery in Folkston. We wish him a speedy recovery!

Welcome New Members!

Susan Steinhäuser, Director
Pooler Area Chamber of Commerce
Pooler, Georgia

Jamie Lloyd, Director
The Science Alliance
Savannah, Georgia

Clark R. Hill, Inc.
Creative services
Video & photography, brochures
Lilburn, Georgia

Bull River Cruises
Savannah, Georgia
www.bullriver.com

Okefenokee Chamber of Commerce
Folkston, Georgia

Little St. Simons Island
St. Simons Island, Georgia

www.littlestsimonisland.com

Spencer House Inn B&B
St. Marys, Georgia
www.spencerhouseinn.com

St. Marys Tourism Council
St. Marys, Georgia
www.stmaryswelcome.com

Cumberland Island Inn & Suites
St. Marys, Georgia
www.cumberlandislandinn.com

Lydia C. Thompson
St. Simons Island, Georgia
www.thebest.net/artworksbylydia

We look forward to working with you!
Thanks also to all those who have sent in their renewals. If you haven't yet joined or renewed your membership, take the time to do it now before you forget!

President's Message

By Sheila Willis

It was my privilege to attend the Earth Kinship 2000 Conference recently. Here are some of the messages from that event: "We are bonded with all life—we can't separate ourselves from other life. Species evolve in the context of community—we must know the story of all. Every generation has a great work to do, is called into being with a purpose. This generation is unique—it must come to a 'sense of place'."

Members of the GNTA have the high honor of being hosts to those who want to experience the beauty of this corner of the South by exploring some of the many marvelous communities found here. We each, in our own way, are helping people develop that "sense of place" which is

called for. As we assist those who might come to find just a "tree", let us not forget to also show them the "forest."

New Bylaws Adopted

As part of its effort to meet legal and other necessary requirements, the ad-hoc committee prepared and presented its recommended amendments to the Association bylaws at the March meeting. These were unanimously approved. Copies of these and the adjusted articles of incorporation will be made available at the May meeting. A Board of Directors was created, and Policies and Procedures were established to cover chapter organization, dues structure, membership terms, and other related items. Other sections related to adoption of a nondiscrimination policy, interim appointments, and disciplinary procedures were also adopted.

Membership Year & Dues Defined

The definition of an Association membership year and the schedule for payment of annual dues is as follows: "membership dues are payable in full at the time of application and shall be effective from that date and due yearly thereafter."

Leadership Transitions

Departures: Jennifer Rachels, Inventory Committee Chair, is now working for the Peace Corps in Romania. Genna Wangsness resigned as Secretary and Newsletter Editor. Good luck to both these ladies in their future ventures!

Arrivals: Joy and Chip Campbell will serve as co-editors of the Association newsletter. Chip Campbell was elected to the GNTA Board of Directors as a Member-At-Large. Thanks to this

talented couple for agreeing to "work for the cause" in these roles. Now serving on the Public Relations Committee are Jane Helms and Edna Manning, while the Membership Committee has acquired Cat Tobler. Thanks go to these women for volunteering to help amid their busy schedules.

Leaders Sought

At the May meeting, elections will be held to chose two **Members-At-Large** to serve on the interim Board of Directors which meets once a quarter. Those elected will serve terms concurrently with their regional chapter's officers' terms. They will assist the Executive Committee, play a role in developing Policies and Procedures, and help organize the Association's annual meeting. If you would like your name placed in nomination for the position but cannot attend the meeting, please notify Lynn Carter before that date.

At the September meeting, elections will be held to fill the positions of Secretary and Treasurer. Please consider serving the Association in either of these capacities and notify Lynn Carter no later than July 18.

Reference Library Additions

Barrier Islands, James Wilson, editor

Earth Ethics-Evolving Values for an Earth Community, Richard Clugston, editor

Landscapes of the Soul, A Spirituality of Place by Robert Hamma

Longstreet Highroad Guide to the Georgia Coast & Okefenokee by Richard Lenz