

Footprints & Paddledrips

The newsletter of the Georgia Nature-Based Tourism Association

Vol. 2 No. 4

June 2000

Cumberland Island Inn & Suites to Host June 20 Meeting

Jackie Livingston cordially invites you to attend the June meeting of the Georgia Nature-Based Tourism Association at Cumberland Island Inn & Suites, St. Marys, Georgia, on June 20, 2000. 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., followed by a presentation by tourism director Janet Brinco, who will talk about historic St. Marys. After a delicious lunch catered by Judy Clark, meeting attendees will have the opportunity to tour nearby Crooked River State Park.

Directions: From Exit 3 off of Interstate 95, take GA highway 40 east into St. Marys. Highway 40 becomes Osborne Road. Look for Cumberland Island Inn & Suites 5 miles from I-95 on the left. For more information, call 912-882-6250.

Bring your mug! Don't forget to bring your coffee mug to association meetings to enjoy our early morning coffee and talk time!

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.

Member Information Needed

A reminder that all members are requested to provide two copies of all their promotional/educational materials to the Association by the next business meeting, June 20. You may send it by mail to Joy Campbell, 1507 North Ridge Dr., Stem, NC 27581 or bring it to the next GNTA meeting in St. Marys on June 20. One set will go to our Web site developers, Lenz Design and Communication, who state that they need as much information on our members' businesses as possible. This should include every brochure, trip description, description of natural areas serviced, every type of visitor experience, and every general reference to wildlife, ecological communities, and specific natural areas (e.g., waterfowl, wading birds, alligators, marshes, beaches, wetlands, farmland, blackwater rivers, Okefenokee, Altamaha, Savannah, etc.) The more content, the more keywords, which will facilitate more "hits" on our site by the Web-surfing public. The other set should be your standard promotional material, which will be kept in the GNTA member reference file. This creative effort will benefit us individually and collectively, so send or bring those materials in!

May Meeting Notes

Lynn Carter, Baxley-Applying County Tourism Bureau Director and GNTA Vice-President, hosted the May gathering of the association. Attendees met at the A. Randall Tuten Environmental Park in Baxley. The featured speaker for this special session was Dr. Phyllis Isley, Director of the Bureau of Business Research and Economic Development at Georgia Southern University. Dr. Isley discussed the Regional ICAPP (Intellectual Capital Assets Partnership Program) grant program, which attempts to address regional economic development needs. One of the main focal points is to help define and market rural southeast Georgia as a tourist destination. Some of projects coordinated by Georgia Southern University focus on the region's coastal and rural communities, Altamaha River, Banks Lake National Wildlife Refuge, and the Okefenokee Swamp. Handouts providing information on the grant application process were made available. During the second portion of her presentation, Dr. Isley spoke on the economic impact of one of the most popular forms of nature-based tourism, birdwatching. She presented the preliminary results of a study undertaken in the coastal areas adjacent to Interstate 95 in Georgia, which revealed that 31% of the visitors had traveled to that location to observe birds. This translated into millions of dollars and thousands of jobs for the Golden Isles communities. Dr. Isley stated that there needs to be more development in the retail market for birders in Georgia in order to take advantage of this increasingly popular, no-consumptive use of the environment. After the meeting,

some members hiked along the site's scenic nature trail.

Leadership News

Dr. Phyllis Isley of Georgia Southern University has offered the use of her staff as **Interim Secretary** for the association and as **webmaster** for the future GNTA Web site. Thanks to Dr. Isley and her staff for providing much needed assistance in these key areas.

Elections for additional **Members-At-Large** who will serve on the interim Board of Directors were postponed until the June meeting. Currently, Chip Campbell serves in this capacity. Cate Tobler has offered herself as a candidate for a second slot. A third individual is also needed. If you would like your name placed in nomination for the position but cannot attend the meeting on June 20 in St. Marys, please notify Lynn Carter (912-367-7731) prior to that date.

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. The **newsletter deadline** for items of interest is not later than 3 weeks prior to the next meeting date. Please include your phone number and e-mail address.

Welcome to New Members

Lenz Design and Communications
Decatur, Georgia
404-373-2021
richard@lenzdesign.org

Sheila Carter
Kingfisher and Beyond Canoe Outpost
Folkston, Georgia
912-496-4834

Michael Gowen
Southeast Adventure Outfitters
St. Simons Island, Georgia
912-638-6334
sea@coastalgeorgia.com

Earlene Crews, Director
Kingsland Convention & Visitors Bureau
Kingsland, Georgia
912-729-5999
visitus@gate.net

Phyllis Bowen
Sapelo Foundation
St. Simons Island, Georgia
912-638-6265
sapelofoundation@mindspring.com

Susan Kidd
The Georgia Conservancy
Atlanta, Georgia
404-876-2900 ext. 33
skidd@gaconservancy.com

Maurice Bailey
The Spirit of Sapelo Wagon and Bus
Tours
Sapelo Island, Georgia
912-485-2170
sapelowagontour@webtv.net

Membership Directory

The Georgia Nature-Based Tourism Association membership directory is being updated and revised. Copies should be available for pickup at the next meeting. When you get your issue, please give it the "once-over" as there are several changes in addresses, contact

persons, etc. As always, if you know anyone who would be interested in joining the Georgia Nature-Based Tourism Association, contact Lynn Carter at 912-367-7731 or lscarter@applingdacoc.com

President's Message

By Sheila Willis

Can you believe we are halfway through the year 2000? It's amazing how the months fly by! Somehow we managed to survive our busy schedules which we thought couldn't possibly hold one more meeting, one more event, and one more business project (deadline yesterday!) I hope that circumstances will allow each of you to take some time in the upcoming summer season to "recharge those batteries". And I don't need a crystal ball to know that many of us would be talking a "busman's holiday"! The canoeists and kayakers will be out on the water, the naturalists will be looking for birds, etc. In a turnabout, now we become the nature-based tourists! So check out a GNTA member's bed-and-breakfast or charter boat service, attend a local festival, and visit a place which you've read about at a past meeting. Have fun and see you at the next gathering!

Year 2000 Meeting Schedule

July 18 - Tootsy Tours, Savannah

September 19 - Jekyll Island Convention and Visitors Bureau, Jekyll Island

October 17 - Stephen C. Foster State Park, Fargo

November 21 - General Coffee State Park, Douglas