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A publication of the North Carolina Department of Commerce
Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development

North Carolina Governor's Conference on Tourism *SETTING THE PACE*



Gov. Perdue speaking at the 2012 Governor's Conference on Tourism in Concord

More than 500 gather for N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism

More than 500 tourism, business and government leaders from across the state gathered at the Embassy Suites in Concord for the 2012 N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism. This year, the Division's annual conference featured dynamic, educational programming and valuable networking opportunities and drew a near-record crowd focused on the theme of "Setting the Pace." Attendees heard from keynote speakers on strategies for success, attended breakout sessions on a range of subjects that included social media, new travel marketing technologies, utilizing research and



The 2012 Winner's Circle honorees (from left): Jim Hobbs, Charlie Shelton, Ed Shelton, Mary Jaeger-Gale and Richard Childress

Governor recognizes Winner's Circle recipients

Gov. Bev Perdue recognized five distinguished North Carolinians on Monday during the N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism for their significant and continuing contributions to the growth and success of North Carolina's tourism industry. She presented the 2012 Winner's Circle Awards to Richard Childress, with Richard Childress Racing in Welcome and Childress Vineyards in Lexington; Jim Hobbs, executive director for the Hospitality Alliance of North Carolina in Raleigh; Mary Jaeger-Gale, general manager of Chimney Rock at Chimney Rock State Park in Chimney Rock; and Charlie and Ed Shelton of Shelton Vineyards in Dobson.

"I commend each of you for your dedication and commitment to helping the tourism industry in North Carolina. And in addition to these awards, you have our sincere gratitude," Perdue said.

"We thank these visionary leaders for their hard work and dedication to our state's tourism industry," said N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco. "Their efforts have significantly improved the state's tourism offerings,

retirement marketing. The Division also offered a first-look at the new advertising and marketing program for the upcoming 2012-13 fiscal year.

The Division partnered with the Cabarrus County CVB to host five travel writers and editors on a brief media familiarization tour prior to the Governor's Conference. Media attendees were invited to ride-along in a racecar at the Richard Petty Driving Experience at Charlotte Motor Speedway in Concord and explore the historic Reed Gold Mine in Midland. Two of the journalists also spent extra time in the state visiting other areas including Charlotte, Asheville and Lexington. During the conference, the writers participated in the Public Relations breakout sessions during the conference where they heard story ideas from tourism partners across the state.

The closing luncheon was presented by the Wilmington and Beaches CVB, hosts of the 2013 N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism, in Wilmington on March 10-12.

Presentations from the conference will be available next week on the 2012 N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism [website](#).

Media coverage of the conference appeared on Time Warner Cable's [News 14 Carolina](#) and Charlotte's [WSOC](#). Also, read the tweets on [Twitter](#) and posts on [Facebook](#), plus checkout the photos on [Flickr](#).



Gov. Perdue conducting an interview with WSOC during the Governor's Conference

'Hunger Games,' other movie business booming in state, Perdue tells Governor's

enhancing economic development throughout the state."



N.C. expects economic boost from 'Hunger Games' fans

North Carolina is [poised to reap major dividends from tourism](#) with the March 23 opening of "[The Hunger Games](#)," the highest-profile movie ever made in the state. "The movie is already a winner for us," said N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco. "The filmmakers spent more than \$60 million in North Carolina, and now fans are eager to come see the locations and go to the restaurants, neighborhoods and other places the stars visited. The money they spend here will be a second payoff for taxpayers." "The Hunger Games" has the promise of both commercial and artistic success. The Division has worked with industry partners to leverage the economic opportunities of "Hunger Games" tourism. Newly developed travel tools, accessed at [VisitNC.com](#), will guide visitors to film sites, star hangouts, and places that connect with the characters and other elements of the novel. "The Hunger Games'

Conference attendees

Perdue told tourism representatives attending the N.C. Governor's Conference on Tourism, "The film business in North Carolina didn't just happen." She credited the state's tourism industry with supporting one of the most robust tax-incentive programs in the country for filmmakers. The film industry increased its spending in the state from \$75 million in 2010 to \$220 million in 2011. "All of that happened because you were our partners with the legislature and the business community. And we need that kind of partnership," Perdue said.



The SXSW Filmmakers Lounge, complete with a masseuse to help filmmakers "Relax," presented by the NC Film Office

N.C. Film Office uses SXSW to promote filming in N.C.

The N.C. Film Office returned to SXSW in Austin, Texas, as a sponsor. This year the N.C. Film Office took over the filmmakers lounge where producers and directors could meet directly with the N.C. Film Office. The lounge provided a relaxing getaway for filmmakers to enjoy complimentary WiFi, massages, snacks and drinks. The N.C. Film Office branded the film lounge with its "Relax" brand, using the office's one-of-a-kind rocking director chairs where filmmakers could sit and rock. The lounge offered the perfect setting for the Film Office to interact and pass on information about filming in North Carolina with attendees in an intimate setting. Over 500 filmmakers enjoyed the lounge while learning about North Carolina's enhanced film incentive.

helped the state film industry generate a record \$220 million in spending for 2011, the incentive's first year," N.C.Film Office Director Aaron Syrett said. "We'll be even happier if it helps tourism reach new heights for 2012 and beyond." Assistant Sec. of Tourism, Marketing & Global Branding Lynn Minges agreed, citing the value of tourism to the North Carolina economy: In 2010, travelers spent more than \$17 billion in North Carolina. That spending supported 40,000 businesses and 183,900 jobs and generated \$1.5 billion in state and local taxes. It also reduced the average family tax bill by about \$400.



Travel Channel debuts North Carolina hub page

The Travel Channel has just launched a North Carolina hub page, featuring the state's mountains, beaches, cities, tastes and more via a collection of articles, photos and videos. In addition, the Division worked with the Travel Channel's interactive team and N.C.'s Craig Distl to compile a list of must-follow Twitter feeds from across North Carolina. Travel Channel producers included several recommended partner feeds in the initial launch, including @HighCountryHost, @ncculture, @onebadchef, @theouterbanks and @visitRaleigh.



Lumberton VB's Mickey Gregory (right) and a visitor at the I-95 North Welcome Center event

I-95 North welcomes bikers

Last Friday, the N.C. Welcome Center at I-95 North was joined by industry partners Halifax County CVB, Rocky Mount T&T and Lumberton VB to promote motorcycle travel in North Carolina by offering specific information to traveling bikers who stopped at the Welcome Center. Dennis Munden, with the website [Motorcycle-Maps](#), also was on-hand.



Charlotte hosts pentathlon competition, other Olympic trials

Several [Charlotte sites served as host facilities](#) for the Modern Pentathlon World Cup and Olympic Qualifier March 8-11.

New ADA changes go into effect this Thursday

The U.S. Dept. of Justice's new standards for the Americans with Disabilities Act [go into effect Thursday](#), which could mean costly changes for some properties such as hotels. Fortunately, the new provisions allow for "safe harbor" for elements that were required under and comply with the old 1991 Standards for Accessible Design. However, one of the biggest changes under the 2010 ADA revisions is that 'removable of barriers' now extends to hotel recreation areas such as work-out facilities and pools.



Smokies backcountry camping fee approved

Last week, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park announced that the park's proposal to begin [collecting for the use of backcountry campsites and shelters](#) has been approved by the National Park Service. This approval clears the way for the Park to move forward with developing an online system to collect fees beginning in 2013 for reserving and use of the Park's backcountry by overnight hikers and equestrians. The Park developed the plan in order to improve its trip-planning and reservation services to users and to expand its backcountry Ranger presence to better protect park resources through enforcement of food-storage and other regulations and improved visitor education regarding Leave-No-Trace principles. The proposal was open for public comment last

Memorial Stadium, the Grady Cole Center, and Mecklenburg County Aquatic Center hosted the five-sport competition that make up the Modern Pentathlon. Athletes from 37 countries competed, attempting to earn points in each of the five World Cup events leading to the 2012 Olympic Games in London. Tim Morgan, director of sports marketing at the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority, says 300 people competed. "Tim showed us Memorial Stadium and I fell in love with the place," said Rob Stull, managing director of USA Pentathlon, the sport's national sanctioning body. "The skyline behind it and Grady Cole being (nearby) was a no-brainer. And as the crowd flies, the Aquatic Center is less than a mile away."

The event is one of three sporting events with an Olympic flavor the Charlotte area will host in the coming months. The U.S. Whitewater Center will be hosting the Canoe Slalom Olympic Trials April 12-14. The UltraSwim event, which annually draws world class swimmers, will take place at the Mecklenburg County Aquatic Center May 10-13.



WFN seeking the Ultimate Fishing Town

The World Fishing Network is [seeking nominations for the Ultimate Fishing Town](#). Voting evidently requires pre-registration, which is open until **April 1**. Pre-registering offers help to plan a nomination and promotion for a town with advice and tips on building a great nomination. Nominations will be taken in April with voting taking place in May. All towns that submit a nomination between April 2 and April 30 will qualify for the public voting period. The Ultimate Fishing Town will receive a \$25,000 community donation, and have a television feature produced on WFN as the Ultimate Fishing Town.

summer and some 230 written comments and two petitions were received during the comment period.



USA Today: Great Smokies among '10 great places to see spring wildflowers'

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is among USA Today's "[10 Great Places to See Spring Wildflowers](#)," noting with more than 1,600 flowering species, some have called this Appalachian area Wildflower National Park. The list was based on a list of favorite spots offered by Bob Gibbons, author of "Wildflower Wonders: The 50 Best Wildflower Sites in the World."



N.C overnight visitors

Over one-third (33.1 percent) of the overnight visitors to North Carolina in 2010 visited relatives while traveling to the state. About one-fifth shopped (20.9 percent) and visited friends (19.1 percent) while visiting. Other popular activities included visiting a beach (17.9 percent), fine dining (13.7 percent), rural sightseeing (12.9 percent), visiting state/national parks (8.6 percent), and visiting historic sites/churches (8.0 percent). See the latest data for your region [here](#). For more information, contact Tourism Research



N.C. GreenTravel: Waste reduction at a property

One of the first questions many managers and owners ask when deciding if their property should implement sustainable practices is what is the cost of doing so? There are three different ways in which the cost of going green can be calculated. The first is the initial cost. For many sustainable practices, such as [establishing a green team](#) or setting copiers and printers to default to print double-sided, the initial cost is only staff time. New creative strategies, such as [solar power purchase agreements](#), can allow your property to use solar energy at no initial cost. The next way the cost of going green can be measured is the payback period. This is the amount of time it will cost for a green practice to result in the same financial cost savings as the initial cost premium of implementing the practice. For some sustainable practices, such as [LED exit signs](#), the payback period can be as short as one year. Since there are [many criticisms of the payback period](#), many experts prefer the third method of measuring the cost of implementing sustainable practices: return on investment (ROI). Calculating the full ROI of implementing sustainable practices can be difficult though. Factors such as improved staff morale or PR can be difficult to link to one specific sustainable practice. There are a [number of resources](#) and [calculators](#) that can help determine the cost of going green. To learn more about the [NC GreenTravel Initiative](#) or for technical assistance, contact [Tom Rhodes](#) at the NC Division of Environmental Assistance and Outreach at (919) 707-8140, or [Alex Naar](#) at (252) 737-1346.

Manager [Marlise Taylor](#) at (919) 733-7278.



'North Carolina Weekend'

For the week of March 15 on UNC-TV's "[North Carolina Weekend](#)," find something special at the Catawba Valley Pottery Festival in Hickory. Take in a performance of the North Carolina Dance Theatre in Charlotte. Celebrate the Irish at the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Charlotte. The Ben Long Fresco Tour concludes with Part 3 in Crossnore. And check out the scene at Catch and Phun in Wilmington. *(Please note: listings are subject to change.)* "North Carolina Weekend" is exclusively underwritten by the N.C. Division of Tourism. In addition, UNC-TV has made recent editions of "North Carolina Weekend" available online.

Upcoming industry meetings & events

March 9-18 - South by Southwest (SXSW), Austin, Texas)

March 15-16 - MPI-CC Meeting, Raleigh

March 19-21 - STS Spring Meeting, Tunica, Miss.

April 12-13 - DMANC Meeting, Smithfield

April 18 & 19 - Division's TRAC Program, Bryson City & Morganton

April 17-19 - NASC Symposium, Hartford, Conn.

April 21-25 - International Pow Wow, Los Angeles, Calif.