

2005 State Tourism Conference

March 2005

this issue

Tourism conference

Award winners

ABA event

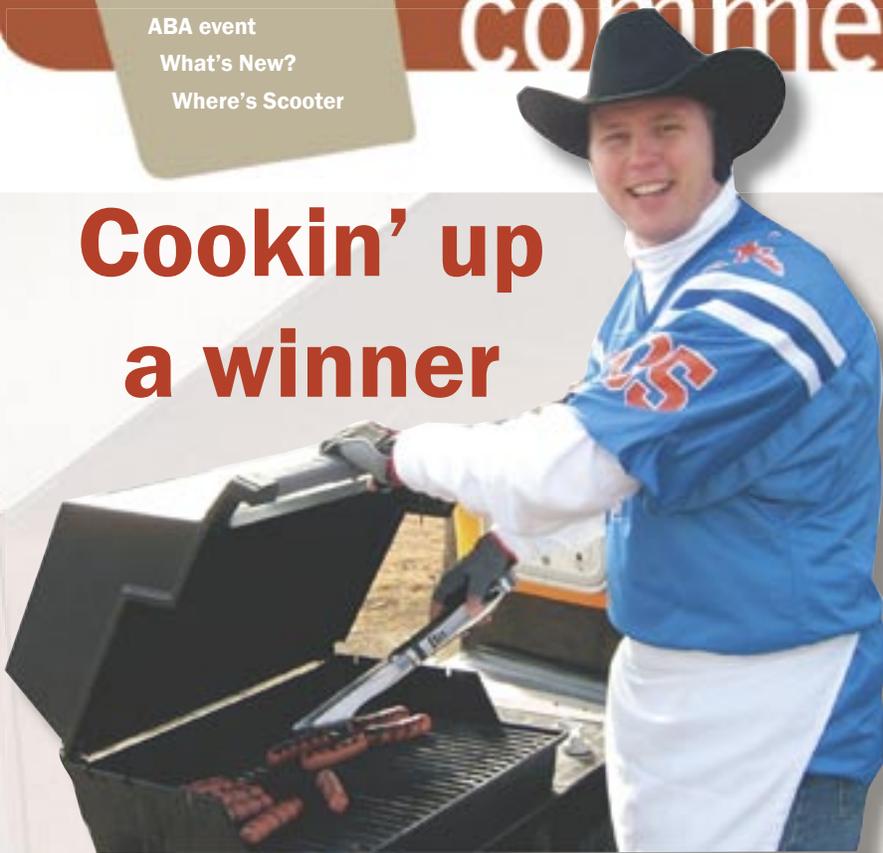
What's New?

Where's Scooter

division of tourism

commerce matters

Cookin' up a winner



Cowboy Wade Westin of Medora worked a chuckwagon of a different kind during the Tailgate Party and Brochure Swap that kicked off the annual State Tourism Conference in Bismarck.

Tourism conference and tailgate party were rousing successes

Golden Valley rancher Lois Wanner, her family and her late husband, Ron, understand the value of packaging when it comes to tourism. Their business, Knife River Ranch Vacations, has developed an international following.

That's why Lois and her family took home two Governor's Tourism Awards from the 2005 State Tourism Conference in Bismarck. The Wanners won for International Tourism and Best Package.

"The Wanners have typified the forward thinking approach necessary to be successful in the competitive tourism industry," North Dakota Tourism Director Sara Otte Coleman said. "It's that foresight that continues to draw visitors from around the world to North Dakota."

Creating travel packages that bring more vacationers to North Dakota was the primary theme of the conference in Bismarck Feb. 27-March 1.

Keynote addresses were presented by Joe Veneto of Opportunities

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Governor's Awards

Six Governor's Travel and Tourism Awards, plus an award for the "Best Tourism Package," were presented during the State Tourism Conference in Bismarck. Winners were presented their awards by Lieutenant Governor Jack Dalrymple and Commerce Commissioner Lee Peterson. The Magnificent 7:

Tracy Potter

Industry Leader Award



Tracy Potter, executive director and president of the Fort Abraham Lincoln Foundation, took on a leadership role with the National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Signature Event held in Bismarck last fall. He's also been a leader in the tourism industry with his role at Fort Lincoln and his time with the North Dakota Tourism Department.

Sheyenne River Valley Byway

Public, Non-Profit Entity



Sheyenne River Valley National Scenic Byway Committee of Valley City spearheaded the \$1.7 million project. The byway has impacted local economic development with the opening of four new businesses along the byway and there has been an increase in lodging taxes collected since the national designation.

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Conference, From Page 1

Unlimited (How to create, promote and deliver compelling travel packages) and Jane Eckert of Eckert AgriMarketing (How rural experiences – agri-tourism – can bring visitors to North Dakota).

Otte Coleman also presented results of the latest marketing campaign and accountability research conducted by the Tourism Division, and the Governor's Awards for Travel and Tourism were presented during Monday's lunch.

The event kicked off with the first-ever Tailgate Party brochure swap. Travel organizations were invited to set up a tailgate to receive and distribute material to statewide entities. The event saved Tourism alone \$3,000 in shipping costs.

The Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau received the traveling trophy for the "Best Stop." ●

We're reaching our audience

Visitors to North Dakota spent more than \$55 million in 2004 as a direct result of advertising by the Tourism Division of the Department of Commerce. For every marketing dollar invested in the U.S. and Canada, the state received a return of \$55 in visitor spending.

Sara Otte Coleman, North Dakota Tourism Division director, said, "Three years ago we began marketing North Dakota more aggressively. The new market research continues to show that we have taken the right direction. We continue to drive traffic and dollars into North Dakota. A return of \$55 for every dollar invested in advertising is an excellent return on our investment."

The accountability study by Longwoods International, a leading travel industry market research company, shows Tourism's Legendary branding strategy continues to attract new visitors. North Dakota Tourism, for the third consecutive year, conducted the research to determine

the effectiveness of its Legendary advertising campaign in motivating people to travel to the state.

"By conducting the research, we're putting our own feet to the fire. We want to measure the effectiveness of our marketing and be accountable for the investment the state is making in tourism promotion," Coleman said. ●

Governor's Awards



Beaver Creek Pumpkin Festival

Private Tourism Entity

Andrew and Kristen Vetter, owners of **Beaver Creek Pumpkin Festival** in Linton, started their event four years ago and have seen it grow into a festival of four consecutive weekends of activities, including an annual bluegrass festival, accordion jamboree, kite festival and trebuchet rally. There are also wagon rides, thematic corn mazes, straw mazes and live entertainment. It draws more than 2,500 visitors each year.



Knife River Ranch Vacations

International Tourism

Knife River Ranch Vacations, owned by Lois Wanner and the late Ron Wanner of Golden Valley, is a world-class guest ranch that has hosted visitors from across the United States, Norway, Sweden and Finland. The Wanners also attended the Reiseliv Trade Show in Norway for five years.



Karen Summers

Behind-The-Scene Employee

Karen Summers has been director of sales at the Seven Seas Inn in Mandan for 10 years and was recently promoted to general manager. She is part of the Bismarck-Mandan Convention and Visitors Bureau marketing committee and has been responsible for bringing hundreds of groups and conventions to the Seven Seas over the years. Karen is always working behind the scenes at pitchfork fondues, early breakfasts and late dinners making sure the details are perfect.

Tourism Conference



"People who are looking to expand their services were able to listen to keynote speakers who have specialized in that part of our industry and hopefully it gave them information and ideas to take home with them to begin their own package vacations."

- Terri Thiel,
Dickinson CVB



Governor's Awards

Tammy Weiler

**Front-line
Tourism
Employee**



Tammy Weiler of the Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau has been with the Dickinson CVB for eight years and helps travelers with a cheerful attitude. On many occasions, she has gone the extra mile to help travelers with lodging, meals and other amenities, which has often resulted in travelers sending a note to the CVB office thanking her for the help.

**Knife
River
Ranch
Vacations**

**Best
Tourism
Package**



Knife River Ranch Vacations, Lois Wanner and the late Ron Wanner of Golden Valley, was recognized for its work in packaging tours to North Dakota.

Best Stop

The Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau entry was voted "Best Stop" at the State Tourism Conference Tailgate Party. At left are Amy Braun and Terri Thiel of the Dickinson CVB. You know the guys below.



What's new ...

ANNUAL REPORT: The 2004 Annual Report for the North Dakota Department of Commerce Tourism Division is now available to tourism industry partners. The report is loaded with features detailing tourism's performance.

Listed in the report:

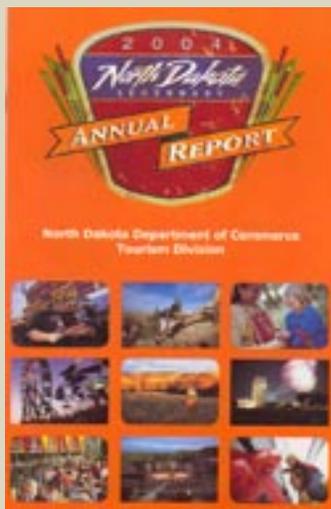
- Accountability Research for 2004 and our 2005 plans.
- Leisure marketing campaign; group travel marketing; outdoor recreation marketing; international marketing; Lewis and Clark marketing.

- 2004 tourism impact numbers

- Public Relations successes

Call North Dakota Tourism at 800-435-5663 for your copy, or visit our Web site at www.ndtourism.com.

LEWIS AND CLARK GRANTS: Lewis & Clark marketing grants are again available. Applications are available on the North Dakota Tourism Website at www.ndtourism.com or by calling Annette Schilling at 701-328-3505. Application deadline is 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 30, 2005. ●



State attends ABA Marketplace event

A group of North Dakota tourism and travel officials attended a key event in Chicago that connected leading bus tour operators with representatives from travel destinations. The American Bus Association Marketplace featured more than 90,000 appointments between tour operators and those marketing destinations, attractions and accommodations.

North Dakota had 11 representatives at the event: Deanne Keller, North Dakota Tourism, Bismarck; Nina Sneider, Buffalo City Tourism Foundation, Jamestown; Jeff Altizer, Williston Convention and Visitors Bureau; Cyndy Aafedt, El Rancho Motor Hotel, Williston; Jim Stellick, Lewis and Clark Riverboat, Bismarck; Kathy Miller, Theodore Roosevelt Medora



Foundation, Medora; Sheri Grossman, Bismarck-Mandan Convention and Visitors Bureau; Sandy Dobmeier, Greater Grand Forks Convention and Visitors Bureau; Sylvia Garcia, Fargo-Moorhead Convention and Visitors Bureau; and Deb Berggren and Sheryl Person of Tharaldson's Properties, Fargo.

They took part in 130 scheduled appointments with tour operators. Making these contacts is important because tour bus stops contribute greatly to local economies. ●

Alternative Tourism Conference

The Sixth Annual Alternative Tourism and Rural Enterprise Conference will be held April 7 at the American Legion Hall in Napoleon.

Roundtable discussions, educational booths and networking on a variety of topics, including Internet marketing, tourism opportunities, agri-tourism, hospitality and liability issues.

Call Lee at 701-754-2684 or Becky at 701-288-2383 for more information or go to www.edgeley.com to register. ●

WHERE'S SCOOTER?

Birds of a feather

Wendy Howe of Minot correctly placed me at the North Dakota Heritage Center in February.

This month, I joined the Redbirds to help our partners. Where was I? Where were we?

Please E-mail your answers to jpursley@state.nd.us by March 21. In the event of a tie, a drawing will be held to determine who receives the Legendary or Lewis & Clark item. Be sure to include your name, address and phone number so I can contact you if you are the winner. ●



A sure sign of spring in North Dakota was the appearance of these Redbirds. Where was this flock recently found?