

may 2006

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division of tourism

commerce matters

Tourism Director Sara Otte Coleman

It is always good to see so many colleagues at our annual tourism conference ... hats off to the DMAND tourism conference committee and the Minot CVB for all their work in coordinating a successful event. We enjoy the partnership!

Governor Hoeven was on-hand to again voice his support for the tourism industry's impact and growth and Shane Goettle, the new commissioner for the Department of Commerce, used the opportunity to meet more tourism players and talk about his vision for tourism as part of the state's overall economic development efforts. They also joined DMAND president Julie Rygg and me in awarding the Governor's Awards for Tourism.

Congrats to all the winners!



*More from Sara,
Page 2*



National Tourism Week

The week of May 13-21 has been proclaimed See America Week (formerly National Tourism Week) by the Travel Industry of America Association. It's the perfect time to jump-start summer vacation plans and "See North Dakota." State tourism partners are encouraged to contact Heather LeMoine at hlemoine@nd.gov for a useful handout and PowerPoint presentation

to promote the value of travel and tourism in North Dakota.



NORTH DAKOTA TOURISM CONFERENCE

Featured Speakers

Roger Brooks (above) was both entertaining and informative during his presentation on Monday. Brooks used humor and common sense to provide the Immutable Rules of Successful Tourism. Don McEachern and Steve Jermanok also shared their experiences during general sessions at the International Inn in Minot.



Tourism Awards

Awards were a big part of the state tourism conference, even the award for best tailgate stop, which went to Fargo-Moorhead CVB. The traveling trophy resided in Dickinson for the past year. For more awards, see Page 2.

More on See North Dakota Week, Page 4





More from Sara

The annual gathering provides an opportunity for various tourism related groups to network with colleagues and state entities. Groups such as New Bohemia, Destination Marketing Association of North Dakota (DMAND), Nature and Rural Tourism Association and the Tourism Alliance Partnership (TAP) all held concurrent meetings during the event. Another meeting of the leadership of 19 tourism associations met to discuss opportunities for collaboration and to begin planning ways to better serve their members and ultimately bring in more visitors.

Many of you loved Roger Brooks' presentation and are interested in using him at the community level to help shape your tourism offerings. I am looking into his programs and the possibility of "buying" his services in

bulk to save everyone money.

The other buzz around the conference was the price of gas. One great idea surfaced from Randy Hatzenbuehler of the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation, who coined the phrase "neighborly travel" to encourage people to travel together this summer. If we can get people to load up their SUV with friends, neighbors or family, we can all enjoy traveling the state and take more trips for the same gas. Sounds like a solution with added benefits for our energy challenge.

We also unveiled a series of icons that will be used to extend our cultural and heritage tourism programs statewide. These themes will allow us to pull together tourism experiences and market them to specific groups. Although the programs would not have funding until next biennium, we have begun planning how we will use the Lewis & Clark experience and awareness to take us into post-bicentennial promotions.

Thanks to the many who picked up their bulk travel materials. The exchange saved us all thousands of dollars we can now use elsewhere. And finally, thanks to my great staff for all their effort throughout the year; travel writers are here, ads are running, inquiries are up, and we are still the most affordable vacation in the country. Here's to a great summer! ●



Kyle Blanchfield of Devils Lake's Woodland Resort accepts his award for the Tourism Division's package vacation of the year. Devils Lake earned the award for the nationally recognized Perch Patrol fishing packages.



Tourism award winners, from left: Presenter Commerce Commissioner Shane Goettle, Kinley Slauter of Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation (behind-the-scenes tourism employee), Bernice Flanagan of Edinburg General Store (U.S. Small Business Administration's Women in Business Champion of the Year), Jim Stellick of Lewis and Clark Riverboat (tourist attraction of the year), Julie Rygg of Grand Forks accepting for Ralph Engelstad Arena (international tourism award), presenter Governor John Hoeven, Shelly Wagendorf of Greater Grand Forks CVB (front-line tourism employee award), Gene Veeder of McKenzie County Tourism (tourism organization of the year), Dick Messerly of CANDISC (event of the year) and Marty Anderson of North Dakota Nature and Rural Tourism Association (travel and tourism industry leader).



Tourism Conference in pictures



North Dakota Tourism staff members promoting all our great sports opportunities



Norsk Hostfest.



Wilma, Barney and Betty from the Dickinson CVB.

Gov. John Hoeven and Commerce Commissioner Shane Goettle.



Jessica Fretty, voice of North Dakota Tourism.

Buffalo City, aka Jamestown.



Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and Fort Mandan.

Do your part

Here are ways to promote tourism in your community



during
See North
Dakota
Week/See
America

Week, May 13-21. Here are tips to spread the message:

- Distribute See North Dakota Week news release (template provided at www.ndtourism.com) on the impact tourism has on your community.
- Distribute See North Dakota Week handout (available at www.ndtourism.com) at community speaking engagements.
- Have local businesses use their marquees to say: "See North Dakota" or "Tourism Works for ND = \$3.4 billion".
- Distribute promotional materials to local gas stations, restaurants and hotels.
- Conduct community presentations on "What to see and do in North Dakota". (PowerPoint presentation available from North Dakota Tourism.)
- Honor front line hospitality employees for the contributions they make welcoming visitors.
- Host a community/region FAM tour for front line employees.
- Do guest appearances on radio shows, TV noon shows, or newspaper letters to the editor on how tourism is impacting our state's bottom line.
- Visit local schools to talk about tourism opportunities in North Dakota. ●

Governor's Photo Contest

Amateur photographers are being called to enter the 2006 Governor's Photo Contest.

North Dakota Tourism hosts the annual contest. Winning photos will be used in the 2007 North Dakota Travel Guide, the 2007 Hunting and Fishing Guide and/or the North Dakota Tourism Web site.

Photo entries will be judged on their ability to showcase North Dakota as a Legendary destination in the following categories: scenery, people, outdoor adventure, attractions and events.

Photos need to be submitted on disc and accompanied by 5x7 or 8x10 hard copy, by Sept. 15, 2006. E-mailing of digital files will not be accepted.

The following information must be clearly printed on the back of the photo: entrant's name, address, telephone number, title of photo, location in state where photo was taken and date photo was taken.

Entries will be judged on originality, interest of the subject matter, and visual appeal and consistency with the category theme.

Entered photos will not be returned and there is no limit to the number of entries allowed per photographer. Only color

Photo Contest, Page 5 ➡

Tourism First Quarter Report

Area of Travel	2006 First Quarter	2005 First Quarter	Percent Change 06-05
State Park Visitors	50,814	44,512	14%
National Parks	8,367	7,309	14%
Web Visits	174,981	139,458	25%
Web site Unique Visits	76,170	69,654	9%
Major Attractions	39,319	49,832	-21%
Local Visitors Centers	8,355	9,950	-13%
N.D. Airport Passengers	165,391	152,106	9%
Cumulative Lodging Tax	\$522,000.51	\$496,083.70	5%
1 percent Lodging Tax	\$285,116.04	\$289,168.31	-1%
Statewide Hotel Occupancy Rate	Jan: 45.1% Feb: 51.1% March: 53.8%	Jan: 45.5% Feb: 52.0% March: 53.0%	Jan: -0.9% Feb: -1.7% March: 1.5%
Statewide Average Room Rate	Jan: \$56.28% Feb: \$58.26% March: \$59.92%	Jan: \$55.12% Feb: \$55.30% March: \$56.08%	Jan: 2.1% Feb: 5.4% March: 6.8%

State Parks: Beaver Lake, Cross Ranch, Fort Ransom, Fort Stevenson, Grahams Island, Icelandic, Indian Hills, Lake Metigoshe, Lake Sakakawea, Lewis & Clark, Turtle River, Fort Abraham Lincoln.

National Parks: Teddy Roosevelt National Park, Fort Union, Knife River Indian Villages.

Major Attractions: Fargo Air Museum, Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center, Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center/Fort Mandan, National Buffalo Museum, North Dakota State Capitol, North Dakota Heritage Center, Pembina State Museum, Plains Art Museum, Yunkers Farm/Children's Museum, Missouri-Yellowstone Confluence Interpretive Center/Fort Buford.

Local Visitor Centers: Bismarck, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo/Moorhead, Grand Forks, Jamestown, Minot, Rugby, Valley City, Wahpeton and Williston.

North Dakota Tourism uses Webtrends to gather visitor data from www.ndtourism.com.

The statewide hotel occupancy rate is measured by Smith Travel Research. If you should have any questions, or would like to be included in the survey, please contact Tricia Miller at North Dakota Tourism, 1-800-435-5663. ●

Photo Contest, From Page 4

photographs are eligible and photographs cannot be digitally altered.

Submission of the photo and entry form is the guarantee that the photographer is the author and copyright holder of the photo. By entering the contest, photographers agree to have their submitted photograph displayed in the 2007 North Dakota Travel Guide, 2007 Hunting and Fishing Guide and/or Web site, www.ndtourism.com. North Dakota Tourism will have exclusive ownership rights to all winning photographs. A \$100 prize will be awarded for each winning photograph. ●

Birding series takes flight

Build your birding business with help from North Dakota Tourism. The Tourism Division recently launched a Birding-Based Marketing Series to statewide partners. The series is E-mailed based, and part of a 10-week program designed to aid in the development, planning and marketing of birding-based tourism.

North Dakota Tourism is working in partnership with birding expert Paul Konrad. Konrad, as author of the series, provides tips and resources to help tourism and travel partners attract birders to North Dakota destinations.

Konrad is one of the most recognized wildlife authors, birders, wildlife photographers and tour personalities in the United States. A former editor of *WildBird* magazine, Konrad is one of the most published wildlife authors in America. Today he operates Wildlife Adventures, an umbrella business that includes a variety of birding and outdoor endeavors.

North Dakota's tourism and travel partners have access to the series at no cost. Weekly segments will be sent through June 19, and will also be available through the Resource Center on www.ndtourism.com.

Birding-based tourism has been identified as one of Tourism's priority niche marketing areas. Advertising promoting North Dakota as a birding destination has appeared in *WildBird* and *Birder's World* magazines.

If you would like to be added to the electronic mailing list and receive the Birding-Based Marketing Series, send an E-mail to Tricia Miller at tamiller@nd.gov. ●

North Dakota Tourism recruiting

Do you have a unique North Dakota business? Do you have a craft or hobby you'd like to share with others? North Dakota Tourism needs you!

The Tourism Division is looking for passionate North Dakotans interested in sharing their knowledge or experiences with the traveling public. Interested individuals could be part of a new "learning-based vacations" program, making money while working with visitors.

The learning-based vacation program originated with the 2005 Legislature. It customizes visits for travelers who want to combine learning with fun and adventure.

The Tourism Division will assist local providers in the development of their program or tour and add it to a new database. This database will then be shared with tour operators upon

What's new ...

New motorcycle map

The Printers in Bismarck and North Dakota Tourism have teamed up to produce a new state motorcycle map.

The map contains information about the great rides in North Dakota, motorcycle laws, mileages between cities and a section for off-road riders.

Motorcycling is a growing activity nationwide. If you would like copies of "Ride North Dakota," contact the Printers at 255-3422 or North Dakota Tourism at 800-435-5663.



Border crossings are up

The most recent data for travelers entering North Dakota from Canada shows an increase of 3.47% between 2004 and 2005.

In 2005, a total of 614,479 passenger vehicles crossed the border compared to 593,843 in 2004. ●

request, or possibly posted on the North Dakota Tourism Web site.

Providers can receive Tourism Division help in developing an itinerary, and with low-cost marketing efforts such as referrals and Web site posting. There is no fee for participation in the program.

For more information, contact Annette Schilling at aschilling@nd.gov. ●

2007 grant applications being accepted

North Dakota Tourism will be accepting proposals for the 2007 Matched Grant Programs until Sept. 8, 2006.

Criteria for programs are available at: <http://www.ndtourism.com/Resources/viewArticle.asp?choice=&ID=257>

For the past four years, North Dakota Tourism has offered two Matched Grant Programs with a maximum award of \$5,000.

The Matched Grant Program has funds available for individual businesses, communities and tourism marketing organizations wanting to promote North Dakota tourism-related programs or projects for the 2007 season.

A grant program specific to events, called the Event Matched Grant Program, has funds available for communities, and event promoters wanting to regionally promote their 2007 tourism-related event.

For more information, contact Fred Walker at fwalker@nd.gov. ●

Business Hotline launched

Gov. John Hoeven, House Majority Leader Rick Berg and North Dakota Department of Commerce Commissioner Shane Goettle kicked off the 2006 Business Congress by launching a new service for businesses that makes the wealth of information, program assistance and expertise in state government available through one simple phone call.

The North Dakota Business Hotline is a toll-free number, 866-4DAKOTA (866-432-5682), that will connect people to the storehouse of business information that exists in state government.

The Commerce Department works with thousands of people and businesses throughout the country, and maintains an extensive database of contacts. Goettle believes the agency can make valuable connections for business people that might turn into win-win situations for all parties involved. ●

Midwest Group Tour Expo

North Dakota Tourism recently attended the Seventh Annual Midwest Group Tour Expo in Minnesota. The event is designed for group tour and travel experts and showcases the latest attractions, sites, destinations and special events with group opportunities.

The show featured approximately 155 tour companies, travel agencies and motorcoach operators from North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Canada. There were approximately 50 exhibitors, including the Fargo-Moorhead CVB, Super 8 Motel of Fargo-Moorhead, Bonanzaville and West Fargo Chamber, in addition to North Dakota Tourism. ●

Tourism at NDNA conference

The Tourism Division hosted a booth at the North Dakota Newspaper Association Conference May 5 in Bismarck. The booth provided a great opportunity for Tourism Public and Media Relations Director Rachel Retterath to meet one-on-one with newspaper editors and reporters from across the state to communicate tourism industry news and happenings. Each newspaper received Tourism's interactive media kit, which includes high-res photos, story ideas, marketing tools, itineraries and contact information that they are able to use as a resource for tourism-related articles. ●

Where's Scooter?

Lady of the Lake

Dennis Clark of Cavalier was one of many people who correctly placed me at Whitestone Hill Battlefield last month. This month, I came across this young lady watching over a vast body of water and protecting all who venture out. Who is she and where am I?

Please E-mail your answers to jpursley@nd.gov by May 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. ●

In the News

(Go to the links below each item for a complete news release)



North Dakota Tourism was in the news in April

April 7: North Dakotans have plenty of fun events to look forward to in April. Here are just a few. <http://www.ndtourism.com/secondary/viewArticle.asp?ID=442>

April 12: N.D. Tourism Division looking for local providers to share knowledge with tourists and visitors. <http://www.ndtourism.com/secondary/viewArticle.asp?ID=443>

April 13: North Dakota travel and tourism destinations were the focus of a recent Winnipeg event. <http://www.ndtourism.com/secondary/viewArticle.asp?ID=444>

April 21: North Dakota offers a variety of vacation packages to suit everyone's lifestyle and interests. <http://www.ndtourism.com/secondary/viewArticle.asp?ID=445>

April 28: Birding-based marketing series launched by N.D. Tourism. <http://www.ndtourism.com/secondary/viewArticle.asp?ID=448> ●

Little travel change foreseen

TIA compared current gas prices to those of a year ago and found that on the typical U.S. driving vacation of 800 miles, higher prices would add \$30 to overall trip costs.

TIA also estimates that for larger vehicles and those towing a trailer or those that are heavily loaded, the per-trip cost will go up \$40 to \$50. High gasoline prices historically cause Americans to make slight modifications to their travel plans but don't cause them to cancel. ●



Something tells me there is water nearby.