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Where Am I? If you can guess this place, you know a lot more about North Dakota than most folks. Care to make a guess as to where I was in this photo?. (Page 4).



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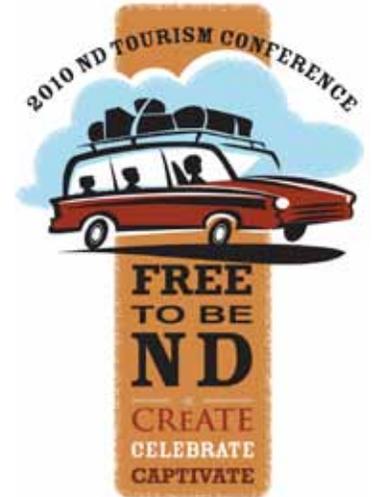
Gone digital: North Dakota's travel guide can be accessed digitally at NDtourism.com (Page 5)



The countdown is on: Tourism Conference just two weeks away

The 2010 North Dakota Tourism Conference is only two weeks away! This is your last chance to nominate a deserving person for a Governor's Award for Travel and Tourism. The awards luncheon will take place April 27. Place your nomination at <http://www.ndtourism.com/industry/2010-north-dakota-tourism-conference/nomination-form/>

Online registration is open at: <https://www.shop.commerce.nd.gov/events/detail.asp?eventID=78>. Here's a preview of the keynote speakers.



Conference Speakers



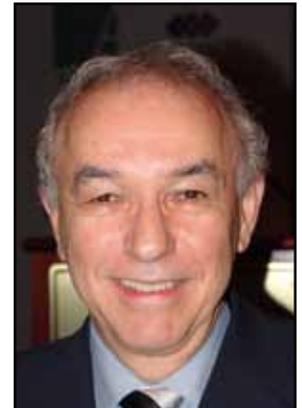
Jane Eckert
Pre-Conference Workshop: Green Tourism Brings More Guests
 — — — — —
General Session April 27: Free to be ND: A Natural Delight

Eckert is a recognized expert on agritourism. She created one of the most successful tourism farms in North America and now helps members of the travel and agriculture industries tap into the agritourism market.



Bruce Christopher
General Session April 28: The Power of Perception
 — — — — —
Breakout Session April 28: Why are Women so Strange & Men so Weird? Effect Communication

Christopher has a psychology background and is known for funny and dynamic delivery of today's hot topics. He reaches out to audiences with real and practical solutions for success, without fluff and hype.



Sam Giest
General Session April 27: Doing More with What you've Got

Giest has business and marketing/consulting experience. He is the author of several books and business guides. He provides actionable strategies to address the obstacles faced by so many of today's organizations.

Get ready for National Tourism Week

North Dakota Tourism is working on several fun, fresh ideas for recognizing National Tourism Week – May 8-16. There are countless ways that partners can get involved – everything from publicly recognizing hospitality staff to painting businesses for the season. Here are some ways you can join North Dakota Tourism in efforts next month. For more information, contact Heather LeMoine at 701-328-5372 or hlemoine@nd.gov.

- Virtual Rally on social media sites, 11 a.m. on May 11
- Join a Skype News Conference, 11 a.m. on May 11



Participate in a North Dakota Tourism news conference with media and possibly the public. This will be done electronically, using the free online service Skype. Partners with newsworthy enhancements and new offerings are invited to participate. Please respond to Heather LeMoine by April 12 for confirmation.

- Provide letters to the editor in local papers – thanking staff, promoting attractions, touting the economic impact of tourism
- Bring a “thank you” to the border, to airports and other places that impact hundreds of visitors

Cookies, donuts and other modest refreshments are allowable “thank yous” to TSA staff at airports and border-patrol staff

The U.S. Travel Association has a toolkit of ideas and templates to get your National Tourism Week planning underway. Check it out at <http://www.ustravel.org/marketing/national-travel-and-tourism-week>.



2010 campaign fully under way

North Dakota’s “I Am Legendary, RU?” campaign is fully underway with numerous television, print, newspaper, radio, out-of-home and online ads scheduled to hit in the coming weeks and months. There are several components of the campaign that partners can and should participate in:

1. Get your video online. For an example, see Watford City’s recent submission on YouTube and in our playlist at <http://www.rulegndary.com/>
2. Get your vacation package listed. In advertisements, special attention is being made on vacation packages at [NDtourism.com](http://www.ndtourism.com). If you’re not listed, you’re missing out.
3. Socialize. Videos, blogging, photo sharing, contests – they’re all going on online. Join us – connect through <http://www.rulegndary.com/>.



Legendary Feature: Birding

North Dakota has great birding. Not only is the state home to more than 300 species, but there are a vast amount of public areas and access to thousands of acres of birding habitat. There are national park sites and state parks and recreation areas, and North Dakota has more wildlife refuges than any other state.

You may not be aware there is a North Dakota Birding Hotline and Rare Bird Alert – operated by the ND Birding Society and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Find it online at http://www.fws.gov/northdakotafiedoffice/bhotline/north_dakota_birding_hotline.htm.

Birding is big business in the tourism industry. Birders travel the world in search of unique species. In 2007, North Dakota Tourism partnered with birding expert Paul Konrad on a 10-part birding marketing series. This series was designed to inform, inspire and help organizations and individuals develop and market birding-based tourism experiences in North Dakota. This informative series is still available online at <http://www.ndtourism.com/industry/birding-series/>.

Travel Promotion Act passes

The U.S. Travel Association is toasting the entire travel community with special thanks for efforts made to support the Travel Promotion Act. Senators Byron Dorgan (D-ND), Harry Reid (D-NV) and John Ensign (R-NV) and Representatives Bill Delahunt (D-MA) and Roy Blunt (R-MO) championed the legislation through two sessions of Congress. President Obama has now signed the bill into law.

The Travel Promotion Act creates the first-ever national travel promotion and communications program to attract more international travelers to the U.S. For more information on this effort visit <http://www.ustravel.org/news/travel-promotion-toolkit>

Regional workshops

Thank you to all the participants and organizers of North Dakota’s regional tourism workshops, held February and March in Watford City, Devils Lake, Medora, Oakes and Garrison. There were more than 140 attendees who got information on cooperative marketing, familiarization tours, tourism business development, online marketing resources, using social media and research. The Tourism Division hopes to continue regional workshops in the future.

UMCVB Conference

The Upper Midwest Convention and Visitor’s Bureau 2010 Fall Conference is scheduled for September 12-14 at the Radisson Quad City Plaza, Davenport, Iowa. Early registration is \$195 per person – and will be opening in July/August. More information will be shared at www.umcvbfallconference.com.

Tech Talk



Each month, the Tourism Division Newsletter will feature technology tips or best-practices for utilizing new tools and Web 2.0. Please share your success stories, or your questions and suggestions, via e-mail to hlemoine@nd.gov.

We Go Places.com

In 2007, more than 105 million American adults used the internet to plan travel that year – a 17% increase from the previous year. As providers of North Dakota vacation experiences, you might be wondering how to get your information where travelers are looking. The first place to be sure to list your attractions, events, accommodations and packages is at [NDtourism.com](http://www.ndtourism.com). These free listings feed press releases and e-marketing efforts and populate the Travel Guide every year. If you aren't currently using partner access, go online to find out how.

<https://www.ndtourism.com/industry/partner-access/>

North Dakota Tourism also makes recommendations on Web sites that offer free listings and unique opportunities. One of these sites is www.WeGoPlaces.com. This site provides information for vacation planning in the U.S. and Canada. For tourism partners, it offers not only free listings but an opportunity to even post discount coupons.

Once you create your user account at We Go Places, you'll see a left-menu link for discount coupons. Here you can create the coupon offer, which a visitor can print and cut-out for visits to your attraction. Currently, activities like the Emter Family Music Theater, Dakota Wizards and North Dakota Horse Park are taking advantage of these free listings.



In the News

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



North Dakota Tourism in the news in March

March 4: As reported throughout 2009, North Dakota's tourism industry is in an upswing, even as the tourism industry struggles nationally. In its 2009 Annual Report, released today, North Dakota Tourism reports additional statistics that further demonstrate the strength of this industry. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=347>

March 4: From the silver screen and Glitter Gulch and all the off-off-Broadway venues in between, March activities in North Dakota offer something for everyone. Begin with a trip down the red carpet – Fargo style – at the Fargo Film Festival, and don't miss Vegas Legends the "Rat Pack" at the Fargodome and Bismarck Civic Center. And for those itching to get outdoors, check out the numerous sports, home and garden shows that provide a taste of the season to come. <http://www.ndtourism.com/smartmail/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=346>

March 10: It's the only month that orders you to do something. March out the door and get ready for spring: tune up the bike, dust off the club, attend basketball or hockey playoff games or get in shape for summer sporting events. You've been waiting for the weather to turn. Now it's your turn. Now March. <http://www.ndtourism.com/smartmail/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=348>

A flying legacy in North Dakota

Here's something Legendary! The North Dakota Aeronautics Commission has created a passport to North Dakota's regional airports. Create your Flying Legacy in North Dakota by stopping at the state's 89 regional airports and stamping your passport. Participation levels have rewards – like a leather flight jacket if you visit all 89.

To participate, visit local publicly-owned airports and request a Flying Legacy program passport or contact ND Aeronautics Commission – 701-328-9650; ndaero@nd.gov



BookDirect program continues at NDtourism.com

In May of 2009, North Dakota Tourism partnered with JackRabbit Systems to promote online booking of accommodations through NDtourism.com. At that time, ALL North Dakota properties had free listings on the JackRabbit BookDirect system – free listings were hosted through March 2010.

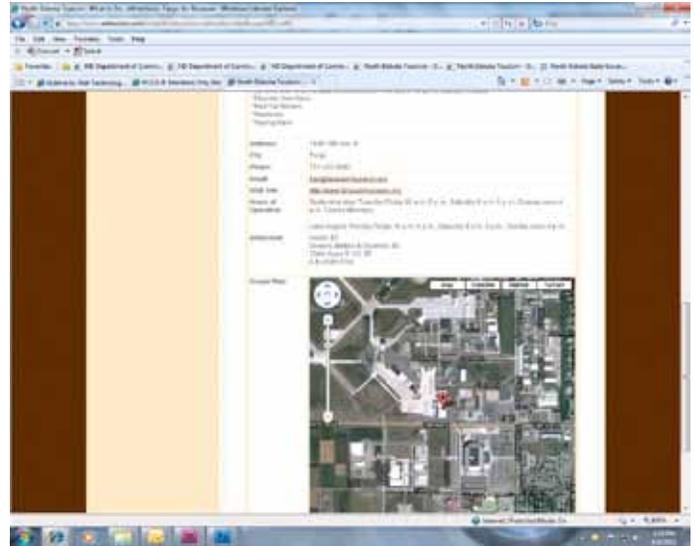
In the time JackRabbit has been on the NDtourism.com site, more than 7,000 leads have been sent to area lodging-reservation pages.



Properties that do not have agreements with JackRabbit have now been removed from the BookDirect feature. A new icon is on the “Where To Stay” page at NDtourism.com and it invites visitors to “Book Now with Participating Properties.” All properties continue to be listed with ND Tourism.

Accommodations providers are still encouraged to list with JackRabbit for online booking. The BookDirect program has a higher conversion for online booking than third-party booking engines. It charges a flat 12% fee on reservations without commissions or other fees. If you already have online booking, getting started is simple. Sign up at <http://jackrabbit-systems.com/signup/>. If you do not have an online reservation system, JackRabbit can provide your property their free reservation engine with step-by-step instructions.

JackRabbit has corporate agreements with 14 chains, and if you are one of these chain properties, you are already signed up: InterContinental Hotel Group, Hilton Hotels, Carlson Hotels Worldwide, Marriott, Motel 6, Best Western, Americas Best Value Inns, Fairmont Hotels, La Quinta Inn & Suites, Wyndham Worldwide, Starwood Hotels and Resorts, Choice Hotel International, Red Lion Hotels and Delta Hotels.



Improvements at ND Tourism & RU Legendary

Attendees at the North Dakota Tourism Conference will hear first-hand about the number of changes and enhancements taking place at NDtourism.com. The Tourism Division is continually working to improve visitor information. Here’s a brief list of changes taking place online and how you can take advantage of them.

- Improved searching of vacation packages and education vacations with new icons – make sure you log into partner access and update or list your packages; special promotion of vacation packages is being made in 2010 advertising
- Google maps included with every attraction, event and accommodation listing – log into partner access to update your address and make the map as accurate as possible; GPS coordinates are accepted
- Digital travel guide with live links to attractions, events,

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Where Am I?

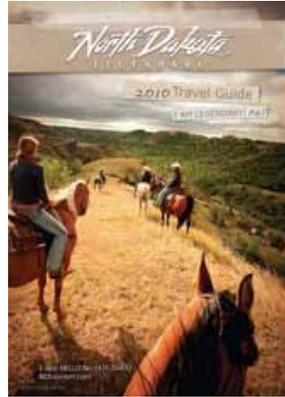
Dorothy Cook of Stanton knows how to read a map. She was the only person to correctly place me at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in Washburn last month. This month’s location is much harder. I seem to be lost in a fog, like most of the state in early March. Can you guess where I am? Send your answers to jpursley@nd.gov by April 26. In the event of a tie, a drawing will be held to determine who receives the North Dakota item.

accommodations and more - <http://www.ndtourism.com/about/digital-travel-guide/>

- Prominent attention given to connecting with North Dakota Tourism in social media – make sure that you are also a friend, fan or follower so we may connect and cross-promote your interests
- Renewed partnership with JackRabbit BookDirect, providing online booking for travelers – Sign up with JackRabbit at <http://jackrabbitsystems.com/signup/>

Enhancements at RULegendary.com

- New video playlist featuring partner submissions
- Live Twitter and Facebook feeds



New digital travel guide

Advertisers in this year’s Travel Guide just got a free bonus. North Dakota Tourism has a new digital travel guide. Flip through all 154 pages of the guide. Zoom into photos and descriptions. Every link in the guide is “hot” – click to open a new browser and go directly to the listing. Every ad with a website is live for that direct visitor connection. Check out the digital travel guide today!

<http://www.ndtourism.com/about/digital-travel-guide/>

Demand for agritourism products is growing

In North Dakota, we answer a lot of questions about agriculture. Here, visitors can live out a real ranch vacation, become a cowboy; even get their hands dirty with some of the best soil in the world.

Agritourism is defined as any agriculturally-based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch. Agritourism has different definitions in different parts of the world, and sometimes refers specifically to farm stays. Elsewhere, agritourism includes a wide variety of activities, including buying produce direct from a farm stand, navigating a corn maze, picking fruit, feeding animals or staying at a bed and breakfast on a farm. Agritourism overlaps with geotourism, ecotourism and culinary tourism. Other terms associated with agritourism are agritainment, value

added products, farm direct marketing and sustainable agriculture.

Agritourism is a form of niche tourism that is considered a growth industry in many parts of the world, including Australia, Canada, the United States and the Philippines. In the US and Canada, there are approximately 65,000 farms and ranches that invite the public to visit, with 63 million Americans visiting farms annually.

Agriculture and tourism continue to be two of the leading industries in North Dakota, so the potential for growth when combining them is huge. North Dakota continues to be the leading producer of twelve major US crops such as spring wheat, canola, sunflowers and honey. People have become more interested in where their food comes from. They want

to meet farmers and processors and talk with them about what goes into food production. For many people who visit farms, especially children, the visit marks the first time they see the source of their food, be it a dairy cow, an ear of corn growing in the field, or raspberries they can pick right off the bush.

The North Dakota Tourism Division has a number of resources available for anyone interested in agritourism or starting an agritourism business. The 2010 North Dakota Tourism Conference will include a “green” preconference workshop on Monday, April 26 featuring Jane Eckert, one of the country’s leading authorities on agritourism development. Plans are also being made for a North Dakota Agritourism Conference to help grow agritourism in the state and address challenges such as liability insurance, marketing and available financial resources.

For information on agritourism resources, contact Dean Ihla, Tourism Development Manager at 701-328-3505 or dihla@nd.gov.

