

Kudos

Our congratulations go out to travel partners who've been featured and recognized this past month. If we've missed you, please drop us a line at ksschmidt@nd.gov

- Hats off and thank you to actor (and Minot native) Josh Duhamel for his social media efforts and interviews with Entertainment Tonight and other Hollywood media outlets to bring awareness to flood-fighting in Minot and throughout North Dakota.
- The Maah Daah Hey Trail made USA Today's list of the top 51 scenic hikes in the US.
- Byways Magazine featured "Middle America North Dakota," including Medora, Bismarck-Mandan, Pembina, the State Fair and North Dakota state parks.

This issue



Tech Tip: See the eight overlooked ways to get the most out of your Facebook presence. (Page 2)

Community Snapshot

New feature: North Dakota Tourism unveils its newest feature: Community Snapshots. This is a brief look at communities in North Dakota. The feature will replace Where Am I?, which is being retired after a seven-year run (Page 5)

Digitally speaking: The latest digital analytics give an indication of visitor awareness toward the state's presence online (Page 4)

In the News: North Dakota was in the news in June. (Page 3)



Flood impacts travel to N.D.



Anecdotal reporting, combined with inquiry numbers and website analytics, indicates statewide flooding is impacting travel to North Dakota this year. The Group Tour Marketing program has had a handful of tours re-route and not include North Dakota in their itineraries and we've had reports from the border that misinformation is leading some Canadian travelers to believe that entire cities are shut down.

The Tourism Division has been communicating the message that "North Dakota is OPEN for business," working with flood-affected communities and attractions to log all closures. Tourism Director Sara Otte Coleman has personally visited all flood-affected areas of the state to get a firsthand account of the impact. Otte Coleman and Tourism Public Relations Manager Kim Schmidt have done a number of interviews and several press releases have been sent by the Tourism Division. Travel information updates are also being posted on the Tourism blog.

We all know that most events, services and experiences are open and a great value for our guests. We need to make sure our industry shares this positive outlook and knows where to help point visitors for information.

Your help is needed to make sure that accurate information is getting to the media and to the public. Talking points are available by contacting Kim at 701-328-2532 or ksschmidt@nd.gov. Likewise, if you hear of points of misinformation, please let the Tourism Division know.

Gov. Dalrymple presses Amtrak over rail service

Governor Jack Dalrymple, the state's congressional delegation and local officials have urged railway officials to invest in infrastructure upgrades critical to North Dakota's long-term Amtrak passenger train service.

Amtrak began detouring its Empire Builder in April, then suspended service between St. Paul, Minn., and Spokane, Wash., on June 1 due to flooding in North Dakota and other western states.

"We made it clear that Amtrak provides a critical transportation function in North Dakota and that additional infrastructure upgrades are needed so that the Empire Builder can continue its service stops in Williston, Stanley, Minot, Rugby, Devils Lake, Grand Forks and Fargo," Dalrymple said. "They understand that this service is important to our local economies and to our state's quality of life."

Officials from North Dakota cities along the Empire Builder route met with Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph Szabo, Amtrak President and CEO Joseph Boardman and BNSF Railway Chairman and CEO Matthew Rose. North Dakota officials pressed for the raising of a railroad bridge near Churchs Ferry threatened by water and for other rail line improvements needed to sustain reliable, long-term service in North Dakota.

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.

Eight overlooked ways to manage successful Facebook pages

Many companies have Facebook pages, yet most don't use them to their full potential. These tips, provided by ragan.com, offer new ways to make the most of your page. Find the entire article at <http://www.ragan.com/Main/Articles/43066.aspx>.

- 1. Write for the news feed, not your wall.** When you write an update for your Facebook page, the update will most likely appear on the page's wall by default. But this is not where 99% of your fans will see the update.
- 2. Promote your page to people who haven't "liked" it yet.** When advertising on Facebook, there is an option to show your ad to people who don't already like your page.
- 3. Don't worry about writing too little.** Some brands want to update their page frequently so their fans won't forget them. Though regularly updating a page is a best practice, it's not as necessary as you would think.
- 4. Invest in sponsored stories – they work.** Sponsored stories focus on organic activity and some advertisers are recording click-through-rates as much as 46% higher than standard Facebook ads.
- 5. Accept that you won't work a nine-to-five day.** If you want to run a successful Facebook page, you're going to have to say goodbye to the usual work day. Your Facebook page's busiest time could occur outside of work hours.
- 6. Don't forget to send updates to fans.** Updates are great for Facebook pages, but have become more hidden as Facebook makes changes. Since updates appear as private notifications use them sparingly and only for important announcements.
- 7. Use EdgeRank to find your best and worst days.** This free checker tool provides insights about your page that tell you more about how people interact with your content.
- 8. Allow fans to tag photos on your page.** Photo tagging is a great way to get new fans and engage your existing fans and photo tagging isn't currently set to default for Facebook fans on pages.

2012 publication news

Work has begun on North Dakota's 2012 Travel Guide and Hunting and Fishing Guide. You aid this work by ensuring that your business/service/event information is updated and accurate on the Tourism website: www.ndtourism.com. Remember – listings online and in the Travel Guide are provided at no charge. Industry partners are asked to enter their information via our free partner-access tool, online at <https://www.ndtourism.com/industry/partner-access/>.

To advertise in the Travel Guide, please contact Clark Van Horn at North Dakota Living, cvanhorn@ndarec.com; 800-234-0518. To advertising in the Hunting & Fishing Guide, please contact Mitch Griess at Armor Interactive, mitch@armorinteractive.com; 701-221-0948.

Important notes:

- To optimize your listing (and search ability) on www.ndtourism.com – be sure to include any and all keywords that are relevant to your partner access listings.
- Be sure to check that your GPS coordinates and Google map is accurate in your listing and move the map pin to make adjustments if necessary.
- If your hotel or travel-related business will be opening in 2012 – please contact Tricia Miller at tamiller@nd.gov to make sure we have your contact information.

ND Tourism taking to the road

North Dakota Tourism staff will be working at several high-traffic visitor areas this month – including rest areas, visitor centers and gas stations. This effort will provide traveler assistance during peak summer travel weeks while also gathering traveler information through an intercept survey.

Please make us "safe"

In order to continue getting the North Dakota Tourism newsletter, press releases and e-blasts from the Tourism Division be sure to add our e-mail address to your "safe senders" list: tourism@nd.gov.

Governor's Conference on North Dakota History

The 23rd Annual Governor's Conference on North Dakota History, October 28-29, will examine the impacts of water on the history of North Dakota. The conference, entitled "Too Much or Too Little: The Story of Water in North Dakota," will be held at the Bismarck Civic Center. The annual awards dinner will also be held at the Civic Center after Friday's sessions.

Former U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan will be the keynote speaker for the banquet. The awards presentation will follow the banquet. The two-day conference will examine the many challenges and opportunities water has presented over the years.

Featured speakers include former Governor Allen Olson; Michael Dwyer, Executive Vice President of the North Dakota Water Users Association; American Indian relations specialist and retired National Park Service official Gerard Baker; and NDSU Professor of Geology Don Schwert.

In the News

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



North Dakota Tourism in the news in June

June 3: North Dakota

Tourism would like to remind residents and visitors of the many experiences available for summer travel, despite the unprecedented water levels that are affecting some attractions and events in Central North Dakota. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=427>

June 3: School is done for the year, so plan a fun family outing. Catch a glimpse of rare birds, take in some music, watch kites soar or enjoy a community-wide celebration. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=426>

June 7: Forgo the gift of the traditional tie this year. Instead create a lasting memory with a fantastic Father's Day outing. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=428>

June 8: North Dakota Tourism would like to remind visitors of the many experiences available for summer travel, despite the unprecedented water levels that are affecting some attractions and events in central North Dakota. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=429>

June 15: You may have had a busy June in North Dakota, but you're just getting started. Gas up the car, load up the family and hit the road. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=430>

June 21: Are you ready for more activities, events & festival fun? We've got it! June finishes strong with a lineup of great things to see and do in North Dakota. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=431>

June 28: Celebrate America's 235th birthday North Dakota style, with a barbecue, a parade and a community get-together. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=432>

June 30: While flooding has been the focus in Bismarck and Minot, N.D., recently, North Dakota Tourism assures travelers that the state's tourism industry is open for business. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=433>

Operation Intern funds available

Operation Intern has matching funds of up to \$6,000 available to North Dakota businesses in targeted industries for any internship, work experience or apprenticeship positions for North Dakota students.

North Dakota Department of Commerce Youth Office Specialist Brianna Strahm explains that during the past legislative session there were a few changes to Operation Intern, which removed the requirement for only funding "new" internships, work experiences and apprenticeship positions. The primary focus remains on the state's five targeted industries (energy, advanced manufacturing, value-added agriculture, tourism, information technology).



For the 2011-13 biennium, Governor Dalrymple and the state legislature awarded the Operation Intern program \$900,000 in funding. Employers can access up to \$6,000 of matching funds for each position, awarded one \$3,000 term at a time. The updated program guidelines are attached. The maximum amount of matching funds an employer can receive per biennium is \$30,000.

As of spring 2011, Operation Intern matched more than 320 students with 138 North Dakota businesses. Funding and student eligibility has been expanded into the 2011-2013 biennium to further develop the program and create more valuable connections between employers and students throughout the state.

If you haven't yet considered opening an internship position at your business, consider some of the benefits of internships:

- Internships are a cost-effective, low-risk way to recruit and train highly qualified talent, helping to identify potential future employees
- Interns can work as assistants to current employees, giving current employees more opportunity to focus on higher projects
- Interns help meet peak/seasonal needs without a long-term employment commitment

Appropriated funds for Operation Intern are limited and applications will be considered on a first-come, first-serve basis. For program details and to submit an application, go to www.OperationIntern.com.

Old Red Old Ten Scenic Byway gets boost

The Stark County Park Board and Morton County have teamed up for enhanced marketing of the Old Red Old Ten Scenic Byway. The organizations are pledging nearly \$30,000 for the project.

ND Tourism Digital Analytics

Digital Unique Audience

2nd Quarter Digital Unique Audience

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| Website Analytics (Unique visitors and mobile site visits) | 131,044 |
| Digital Travel/Hunt and Fish Guides (Unique visits) | 2,390 |
| Twitter Audience (Reach) | 461,910 |
| Facebook Audience (Monthly Active Users) | 19,550 |
| E-Newsletter Audience (Total subscribers) | 24,144 |
| YouTube Audience (Unique Visitors) | 58,425 |
| Flickr (Members) | 198 |
| Total Digital Unique Audience | 697,661 |

Digital Impressions

2nd Quarter Impressions

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|--|------------------|
| Website Analytics (Page views and mobile site visits) | 759,866 |
| Digital Travel/Hunt and Fish Guides (Page views) | 140,608 |
| Twitter Audience (Impressions) | 2,435,297 |
| Facebook Audience (Impressions - post views) | 1,059,692 |
| E-Newsletter Audience (Total E-mail audience) | 144,584 |
| YouTube Audience (Upload views) | 3,897 |
| Wordpress blog (Monthly views) | 12,507 |
| RULEgandary Tracking (Total visits) | 27,588 |
| Total Digital Impressions | 4,584,039 |
| Tourism Inquiries: Includes lead fulfillment and pages printed from website | 29,594 |

Where Was I?

I have been all over the state since this feature launched in February 2004. And I have no plans of leaving. But beginning this month, we will begin running a Community Snapshot feature in place of Where Am I. To all those who took a guess over the last seven years, thank you for



participating. The last Where Am I winner is Faye Roth, who correctly placed me at Sitting Bull's Burial Site in Fort Yates.

Preservation North Dakota 2011 grant recipients

Preservation North Dakota has announced their 2011 Grassroots Grant recipients – totaling \$18,000.

Prairie Churches Grassroots Grants

- Emmaus Congregational United Church of Christ - Carson, Grant County
- St. Andrew's Preservation Committee, St. Andrew's Lutheran Church - Zeeland Vicinity, McIntosh County
- Vang Lutheran Church - Manfred, Wells County

Prairie Places Grassroots Grants

- Hillsboro Community Partnership, Union Block - Hillsboro, Traill County
- Johnson-Ostrem Preservation Fund, Johnson-Jacobson-Ostrem House - Manfred, Wells County
- Mayville Campus Preservation Society, Northwest Hall - Mayville, Traill County
- OPERA, Inc., Ellendale Opera House - Ellendale, Dickey County
- Wimbledon Community Museum, Midland Continental Depot - Wimbledon, Barnes County

Grassroots advocacy webinar

The U.S. Travel Association's Power of Travel Coalition is hosting a free webinar with tools on connecting with legislators during the August Recess. Members of Congress return home to their districts during the month of August to meet with constituents and hear about local issues.

The Power of Travel Coalition encourages travel advocates to take this opportunity to connect with lawmakers and discuss the direct impact that travel has for them.

Visiting Your Lawmakers During The August Recess

Wednesday, July 20
2-3 p.m. ET

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/563458529>

Help promote photo contests

If a picture says 1,000 words, imagine how much value that has to your community! Please help promote our photo contests.

The annual Governor's Photo Contest is accepting entries through August 31. The monthly Flickr photo contest is awarding prizes each month. For information on the contests, see rules on our website: <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=422> and on our flickr group page: <http://www.flickr.com/groups/northdakota/>

Industry factoids

- Incoming visitors from Sweden to the U.S. increased by 7% January-March 2011.
- Travelers spent up to \$12.3 billion in the U.S. in April, boosting international visitor spending estimates between January-April by 13%.
- US highway travel dropped 2.4% around the country in April; falling the most in the North Central region. The only states that did not see a drop in highway travel were North Dakota and Wyoming.

Community Snapshot

Does your community have a "Hidden Gem," a special "Did you know fact" that you would like other North Dakota tourism partners to know about? Have your community showcased through the tourism newsletter. Each month, a community snapshot will be featured. Our first submission is **Jamestown.**

Jamestown was settled in 1883 and is known for the James River. Its current population is 14,700; its ethnic ancestry is mostly German, German Russian and Norwegian; and top industries/employers are North Dakota State Hospital, Goodrich Corporation and Jamestown Public Schools.

Hidden Gems: Three albino buffalo and the World's Largest Buffalo Statue.

Did you know: There are western shootouts throughout the summer at the popular Frontier Village. ... Pipestem Horse Camp and Trail offers riders a 4.5-mile trail over rolling hills and a beautiful view of the lake. ... Jamestown has three personalities in the Rough Rider Hall of Fame: Anne Carlsen, Louis L'Amour and Peggy Lee. ... Darin Erstad, Travis Hafner and Astronaut Richard Hieb also are personalities from the Jamestown community.

Special Events: White Cloud/Tatanka Festival – July 7-10; Culture Festival in the Arts Park, July 15-16; Runnin' O' the Green, March 19.

For more information on Jamestown, contact Nina Sneider at 701-251-9145 or director@tourjamestown.com.

To have your community highlighted in the tourism newsletter, please contact Deanne at 701-328-2502 or Email: dfelchle@nd.gov to receive your form.

