

Tourism Talk

News & Notes from the Daytona Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

Spring/Summer 2007

Message from Sharon Mock

Change is good - and we've got plenty of great changes going on in our community these days. These changes are not only important for attracting visitors (and their spending dollars) to the area, but also for improving our own quality of life, as residents.

The much-anticipated Ocean Center expansion is now set for a summer 2008 completion date. Nearly tripling its size, this project will enable us to attract a much wider variety of quality meetings and conventions, with huge economic impacts to the area.

There's so much going on. On the east side of the County, we've added high quality brand hotels around the Speedway and I-95. New hotels, condominiums and condo-hotels are in the works throughout the area. The A1A beautification project in Daytona Beach - with its inviting palm trees, grassy medians and colorful bricks - is making a stunning welcome statement. New beachside parks will be opening near the Boardwalk area, and the Boardwalk itself will take on an entirely new look. New restaurants and retail shops are coming in. New attractions and activities have been developed. Destination Daytona, with its hotels, restaurants, shops and meeting space, is becoming a real showplace along Interstate 95.

It's amazing to think that a few brief years ago we were dealing with the aftereffects of several powerful storms in our area. Our focus has shifted from recovery to progress, and I believe our progress has been impressive. We still have a long road ahead, but the journey promises to be exciting.

All of the new tourism-related assets coming into our area can add a great deal to your family's enjoyment of the area, and they boost our economy as well. Whether it be new hotels to house your visiting guests, attractions to enjoy with your family, or museum exhibits to explore with friends, the changes we're seeing are both dynamic and positive.

Thank you for the warm welcome you continue to provide our visitors, and for the spirit of hospitality that brings them back to the Daytona Beach area year after year!

Sharon Mock
President & CEO

See America Tourism Week Event

The nation will be celebrating the positive impact of tourism this May, and you are invited to the CVB's local See America National Tourism Week event, scheduled for 8 a.m. on Tuesday, May 15. Please mark your calendar and prepare to

join us at the Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort. The event includes

breakfast and will feature a panel discussion with leaders in our local tourism industry. In addition, Visit Florida President & CEO Bud Nocera will be onhand to provide a statewide perspective. What does the future hold for our tourism industry? Find out during See America National Tourism Week! For more information or to reserve a seat, please call Lori Campbell Baker at (386) 255-0415, ext. 130. Cost is \$15 per person.



NEW DAYTONA BEACH.COM!

Have you seen the exciting, new daytonabeach.com website? Daytonabeach.com features a colorful depiction of the best of what's to see and do in the area, complete with attractions, eateries, parks, tours, cultural offerings, sports facilities and more. Also included is an extensive list of area accommodations, along with some great ideas for family itineraries. The new site is perfect for visitors, but equally perfect for locals! Please take a few moments to check out the site, and let us know if you have any ideas for future revisions. Your input is always appreciated!



Half-penny Sales Tax Delivers!

Good news! That additional half-penny sales tax which was designated for funding Volusia County school construction has netted even more of an economic boon than originally anticipated - and visitors are really paying their way! A report by UCF's Dr. Mark Soskin estimates that approximately 40% of these tax collections are actually generated by visitors to the area. This means that the hospitality industry alone has generated approximately \$61 million in half-penny tax revenue to date - all of it dedicated to Volusia County Schools. Ultimately, (given a conservative estimate of 2% annual growth), half-penny sales tax income is expected to reach more than \$554 million through the year 2017 - and more than \$222 million of that will have been paid by tourists!



What Else is New?

Daytona Lagoon is now home to a beautifully restored merry-go-round that was once part of the historic Boardwalk, DAYTONA USA has added a fascinating new Car of Tomorrow exhibit to its motorsports offerings, and Daytona Lagoon Waterpark & Family Fun Center has some exciting new waterslides in store for its 2007 visitors.

Thanks 2 You, Volusia!

Many thanks to the hundreds of area residents who participated in the CVB's recent Thanks 2 You, Volusia! resident appreciation program. The program, which ran through Jan. 31, offered special discounts on local accommodations, attractions, restaurants and more. The goal of the program was to encourage residents to take the time to enjoy the many tourism-related assets available "right here in our own backyard" – from the perspective of a visitor. Residents were encouraged to enjoy the tourism treasures and to participate in the "Backyard Tourism Contest."



Contest winner (and 38-year resident) Karen Bishop, an administrative secretary with Volusia County Schools, was thrilled to receive a complimentary spa treatment and stay at The Shores Resort & Spa. Her prize package also included gift certificates to the Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. and DAYTONA USA. "This area really does have a lot of great assets," says Bishop. "My family loves camping and boating, and we really enjoy the Daytona Cubs and Stetson University baseball games, the Marine Science Center and DAYTONA USA. My husband and I stayed at The Shores property 20 years ago this May for our honeymoon. What a thrill to be coming back with our family!" Got suggestions for the 2008 program? Please call Lori Campbell Baker at (386) 255-0415, ext. 130. We'd love to hear from you!

Bringing Meetings to Daytona Beach

Meetings and conventions bring millions of dollars into our economy each year, and attracting them requires both focus and dedication. Director of Convention Sales Sally Gardiner was recently recognized as one of the top seven convention facilitators nationwide in the small meetings market. The SMERF Meetings Journal – an industry publication that caters to the small meetings market that include social, military, educational, religious and fraternal organizations - awarded Gardiner with its prestigious Star award. In addition, Gardiner made history as the only Religious Conference Management Association (RCMA) board member ever to be asked to serve a second term!



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Want the latest info on what to see and do in our community and around in our area? How about ideas on some great ways to entertain a house-full of friends and family? Community and tourism events are now posted on daytonabeachcvb.org and daytonabeach.com. If you've got a community event to promote, you can post it yourself on daytonabeachcvb.org. The CVB also offers many helpful publications to residents, including its countywide Visitors Guide, Arts Map, Golf Guide, Superior Small Lodging Directory and more. Call (386) 255-0415 for a copy.

How Big is Tourism?

Tourism is big – really big! Tourism not only provides a lot of fun for visiting families and convention delegates. It also provides solid economic benefits to our local economy. A healthy tourism industry has a positive economic impact on us all, paying dividends in ways we don't always realize.

Annually, the area welcomes around 8 million visitors who stay in area hotels, motels, rental condominiums, timeshare units, vacation homes or with friends and family. These visitors spent \$4.2 billion at local businesses. In fact, visitors generate approximately 40% of all local gasoline and sales tax revenues collected. The local hotel and timeshare industry alone paid about \$25.5 million in property taxes, and the local tourism industry employs more than 42,000 local residents.

GREAT EVENTS - COMING SOON!

The Daytona Beach area has plenty of great activities for your family and friends to enjoy. What's next on the community agenda? Here is just a small sampling of the diverse happenings scheduled for the remainder of 2007: **Spring Family Beach Break** (thru May 24); **Spring Car Show & Swap Meet at Daytona International Speedway** (March 23-25); **East Central Florida Antiques on the Avenue** (April 14-15); **Halifax & Indian River Clean-Up** (April 21); **Petals & Palettes Art Festival** (April 22); **National Cheerleading Association's Cheer and Dance Championships** (April 4-8); **Art in the Park at Rockefeller Gardens** (May 5-6); **NCAA Division I Women's Golf National Championships** (May 22-25); **Pepsi 400** (July 7); **Florida International Festival, featuring the London Symphony Orchestra** (July 13-29); **Biketoberfest®** (Oct. 18-21); **Florida SkyFest** (Oct. 27-28); and **Daytona Turkey Run** (Nov. 22-25). For details on these, as well as a more comprehensive list of events and festivals, log on to daytonabeach.com.

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