



GAMG 2008

Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries Newsletter

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President's Message

Brent Tharp

Recently, the Georgia Department of Economic Development released a report based on its Georgia Museum's Assessment Survey. The report, Preliminary Overview of Georgia's Museums

Interconnectivity with Georgia's Tourism Industry, is an initial attempt to understand "the degree to which museums are currently connected to the tourism marketing community." With the premise that well-defined marketing goals could help address the increased competition that museums face in establishing themselves as attractions and thus increasing visitation, the long term goal of the study is to encourage museums to take a multi-agency approach and partner with local community groups, county, city, and state agencies or departments to create sustainable audience development.

Many of you may have received the survey via GAMG's list serve. Fifty-seven institutions responded. While not comprehensive, the results provide some interesting statistics. Not surprisingly, museums noted that funding was the most important challenge, and they meet that challenge with a diversified response. Eighty-one percent have created space in their facilities dedicated to capturing additional revenue, including rental space for meetings and events (50%), gift shops (41%), and cafés, theaters, and lecture halls with a total estimated revenue of \$15,288,507 in 2007. Respondents also indicated that staff size was a major challenge. The vast majority of institutions were small, with staffs under 15 and most under 5, including full time, part-time, and volunteer employees. Finally, marketing was noted as a major concern, especially considering that while nearly 40% of respondents had noted an increase in attendance, the same amount had seen no change at all, and 21% had seen a decrease in visitation over the last three years. The majority reported 5% or less of their budgets were dedicated for marketing though most were connected to their regional or community destination marketing organizations, mostly convention and visitor bureaus. Ultimately, the report concludes that access to marketing resources, expert staff, and key programs are the best way for the state tourism office to address the need to increase attendance, though more feedback and guidance was needed to identify the most effective approaches.

If you did not participate in the survey and would like to see the full report and its additional statistics and information, contact Carole Pickett at the Georgia Department of Economic Development at 404-962-4111 or email her at cpickett@georgia.org.



Administrative Director's Message

Michele Rodgers

Excitement is building in Marietta and Kennesaw as museums and galleries plan the upcoming GAMG Annual Meeting. The Host Committee has promised two fun evenings of food and fellowship, while the program committee has filled the days with enlightening sessions and a top-notch keynote speaker. Now it's all up to you. Early registration

ends on January 9th, and the Hilton is only guaranteeing special conference room rates through December 21st, so be sure to register now! You may register online from the GAMG website, or by mail. Let me know if you need registration materials by emailing me at gamg@gamg.org or by calling 770-853-7539. I look forward to seeing you all in Cobb County in January.

NOMINATE FOR THE GAMG BOARD!



To keep the Board balanced, GAMG should have different areas of the state and different museum disciplines represented. Please consider who you would like to represent your town or part of the state. The term of office is 2 years, with quarterly meetings in different locations around the state. Board members usually

serve or have served on GAMG committees and participate in various functions of the organization.

Please make sure to include your name and contact information (as a nominator) along with the information about the person you are nominating. Send to GAMG Nominating Committee, c/o Gretchen Greminger, Jekyll Island Museum, 381 Riverview Dr., Jekyll Island, GA 31527; or call 912/635-4034, or email ggreminger@jekyllisland.com.

ANOTHER CHANCE FOR A GREAT RESOURCE OPPORTUNITY!

Targeting small and medium size institutions, the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is offering a free collections library. This third round of Connecting to Collections: The Bookshelf promises to award 1000 free sets of practical resources to help the nation's museums and libraries sustain our heritage.

Applications are not complicated and are easily accessible through www.AASLH.org/Bookshelf.

The application period is January 5 March 9, 2009. For a list of the publications included, go to www.imls.gov/pdf/BookshelfGuide.pdf and download the User's Guide.



www.gamg.org • Check It Out!

Cecelia Hinton
Chair, Education Committee

Highlights of Educational Programs in Georgia Museums and Galleries:

Georgia museum educators were asked to send a brief description about one of their favorite programs. These examples show a variety of innovative and interesting programs. At the 2009 GAMG Annual Meeting, Georgia Museum Educators will continue to discuss outreach programs and share experiences in developing and marketing them for schools and other groups.

Atlanta History Center: The Atlanta History Center offers special monthly programs just for homeschool students and their families. Each month, students explore a different subject through exhibition tours and related crafts and activities.

Booth Western Art Museum: For 5 years, the museum has provided the "Educational Outreach Program" to the community with entertainment, tours, art programs and student art exhibitions by working directly with the Cartersville Boys and Girls Club and Hands of Christ After School Program with students in grades K-12.

Carlos Museum: A new outreach program to schools, "Royal Class: Kente, Gold Trade and the Asante Kingdom," places special emphasis on grade 7 social studies standards. Students survey the Asante people, proverbs, history of the "Golden Stool," and founding of Ghana as the first independent African country and explore gold weights, learn to drape kente, and create a durbar festival.

Fernbank Museum of Natural History: "Urban WatchAtlanta" is a unique, hands-on field study program that trains teachers and students to investigate and improve local green spaces, such as schoolyards and neighborhood parks. Using authentic scientific research methods, this Georgia Performance Standards-correlated program has already impacted thousands of

students by connecting them with their environment in an unforgettable way!

Georgia Aquarium: Through interactive exhibitions, students in the Learning Loop Educational Experience expand their understanding of the importance of aquatic ecosystems and view the animals in their exhibits while discovering the world behind the scenes: husbandry staff attending to the animals, filtration systems and maintenance of exhibits.

Georgia Capitol Museum: The museum offers school groups an engaging, hands-on guided tour of the Georgia Capitol. Students journey through Georgia's history, learn about our state government, and participate in the lawmaking process.

Georgia Museum of Art: Art Adventures is an annual community-wide program in the summer that reaches over 750 children. Teachers visit organizations and community centers and give 1-hour workshops on works in the permanent collection of the museum.

Imagine It! The Children's Museum of Atlanta: Based on the popular television series, Bob the Builder™ – Project Build It! is an all-out exploration of the world of construction, from blueprint to final tall building! Through January 4, 2009, aspiring young builders and their families can help get the job done in Sunflower Valley.

Marietta Museum of History: College students are invited to a monthly "College Coffee Night" event where they can socialize; get free coffee and snacks; participate in a challenging trivia game; and tour the museum for \$3. University staff have congratulated our efforts to provide an alternative to the typical college scene.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Special Tours:

Rich history and breathtaking art await GAMG conference attendees in downtown Marietta in January 2009. On Wednesday, January 21, six local institutions will offer dinner and tours through the historic downtown. The Marietta Trolley Company will transport guests between the sites so that attendees can sit back, relax, and enjoy the ride.



William Root House

Conference attendees will step back to 1845 at the William Root House, a beautifully restored home that helps tell the story of middle class life in North Georgia at a pivotal time. Next, guests will travel to the famed Kennesaw House, the starting point of the Civil War's Great Locomotive Chase. The Kennesaw House is home to the Marietta Museum of History, where Museum Mice are known to guide tours! Only steps away, the Marietta Gone With the Wind Museum pays tribute to a southern classic.

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Another stop on our tour will be the Marietta/Cobb Museum of Art, featuring a fine collection of American art. The museum itself is housed in an architectural gem, a lovely 1910 Greek Revival building that once housed the local Post Office. Nearby, Avery Gallery, which specializes in fine art, restoration and custom framing, will open its doors to conference attendees.



Owner Shae Avery might even be persuaded to provide a behind-the-scenes peek at his restoration work.

Finally, the Marietta Fire Museum will appeal to the kid in each of us by showcasing five historic fire-fighting vehicles and a wealth of vintage fire equipment. To top it off, the Museum will offer visitors a sampling of the staff's famous Firehouse Chili.



So, if you haven't registered for the Annual Conference yet – now is the time, because you sure don't want to miss this exciting adventure!

2009 GAMG AUCTION

The annual GAMG auction will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday January 22, 2009 at the Kennesaw State University (KSU) Center in Marietta. Many thanks to Dr. Catherine Lewis and Ms. Patricia



Mosier of KSU for graciously offering to host this event, which is always held during the annual conference. Our hosts are going to add a little swing to the party this year, so come prepared to have fun!

GAMG members, please bring to the conference or send in an item to be auctioned. Among the more popular donations for the auction

have been services such as dinners or consultations. Humorous items are always a big hit and we have had veritable showdowns over stuffed fish, snake oil, and the like. Gift baskets featuring items from your museum shop or weekend get-aways also rank high among the favorites. Your creativity and imagination can run wild.

Remember, this auction supports two great programs. The MUSE program (Museum Services Exchange) enables consultants to be matched with museums that are in need of help with exhibits, programs, education, facilities, etc. Secondly, the auction provides money for scholarships for students.

A NEW MUSEUM OPENS IN CARTERSVILLE

Tellus: Northwest Georgia Science Museum will open in Cartersville, GA on January 12, 2009. When completed, Tellus will occupy more than 125,000 square feet and feature galleries devoted to minerals, fossils, transportation technology, and hands-on science experiences. Tellus will also house the only fully digital planetarium in North Georgia regularly open to the public, and images seen through the telescope can also be transmitted to the museum's planetarium and theater so that large groups can enjoy the wonders of the observatory.

The Tellus was developed by Frank Bergman of the Bergman Group, Miami, Florida, and John White of Inox Design, Marietta, Georgia. With a soaring 65 foot apex clearly visible from I-75, the facility will attract the attention of tourists traveling I-75 from the Midwest to Florida. It will incorporate the Weinman Mineral Museum, which will continue to offer its hand-on science programs for students. Able to accommodate up to 50,000 students per year, Tellus staffers hope to combat current trends showing a lack of student achievement in science by engaging students at an early age and encouraging interest in math and science.

The name Tellus comes from the Roman goddess of the Earth, or Mother Earth. The major learning spaces at Tellus will include:

- A 125-seat Digital Planetarium featuring a variety of astronomy programs, stargazing events, and family activities.
- Fossil Gallery showcasing a 40-foot *Tyrannosaurus rex* along with other dinosaurs and fossils allowing visitors to trace the history of life on Earth.
- In the Transportation Gallery, visitors will relive

major developments in science and technology related to automobiles, airplanes, and space travel.

- My Big Backyard will be full of hands-on science exhibits introducing concepts from the



physical sciences and biology through backyard science experiences.

- Weinman Mineral Gallery will showcase one of the largest and most comprehensive collections in the Southeast, drawing from more than 4,000 rocks, gems, and minerals.
- A 200-seat Theatre will host films, lectures, presentations, special events, and community functions.
- Tellus Observatory, with state of the art 20" telescope, will give visitors the opportunity to explore the wonders of the night sky. In addition, a solar telescope will allow safe observation of the Sun.
- Science Trails offering outdoor learning adventures will be integrated throughout the Tellus site, including a trail highlighting trees indigenous to Georgia, a mineral garden with boulder-size specimens, and a display of mining equipment, including a 200 ton dump truck.

So come and explore the Earth and reach for the stars!



Georgia Association of Museums & Galleries
c/o Michele Rodgers, Administrative Director
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