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Tourism Momentum

Important Dates

Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Commission Meeting
9:30 a.m.
August 15, 2005
Location TBD

Oklahoma Tourism Promotion Advisory Committee Meeting
10 a.m.
August 4, 2005
Location TBD



Tourism Momentum

NEWS FOR STAKEHOLDERS IN OKLAHOMA TOURISM

OTRD Growing and Moving Forward



Tina Gilliland

First, I want to thank you for your patience and understanding over the last few weeks as we moved our offices from the Colcord Building to our new home on the sixth floor of the First National Center.

We are settling in to our new space and everything is starting to come together. Although our agency's move was not due to choice (the Colcord Building has been sold and is being remodeled into a boutique hotel), there are many positive aspects to our new location:

- The entire Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department is now located on one floor as opposed to six different floors. This not only facilitates communication among divisions, but it also is more convenient for industry partners who visit and have business with several different OTRD staff members.
- We have reduced our annual operating costs and the renovation expense for our new space was absorbed by the First National Center.
- As part of our space agreement, we are able to have an area in the first floor of the First National Center to provide Oklahoma travel information and brochures.

I also want to update you on a couple of major projects and issues. As you may be aware, over the last year there has been a total change in our division's publications staff. Our new publications coordinator, Lesly Pyle, is onboard now and working feverishly to get the production of our publications up-to-date and on schedule. We have experienced some

challenges getting the *2006 Oklahoma Travel Guide* design bid through the state purchasing system, causing a delay in getting you the ad sales information for the 2006 guide. The process seems to be underway now, so please watch your mail and e-mail for the *2006 Oklahoma Travel Guide* ad sales packet to arrive shortly. We have also mailed city listing updates to CVBs, chamber offices and tourism promotion organizations. The good news is that the advertising rates will remain the same as last year and, even with the delay, the 2006 travel guides will be delivered by November 2005. As for other publications, the *Oklahoma Guide to RV Parks, Lakes and Campgrounds* is in the final design stages and we are entering the last of the 2006 event listings into our database for the *2006 Calendar of Events Guide*.

At the beginning of June, we finished the rating process to select an advertising agency for the state's tourism marketing and advertising campaigns. (Every five years our department is required by law to put the contract out to bid.) I am pleased to inform you that the review committee has recommended the contracts be awarded to Ackerman McQueen. There is an official process that is underway with our department and the Department of Central Services to officially award the contracts.

Change is never easy, but I believe it keeps us growing and moving forward. Thanks again for your understanding and support as we move ahead on these projects and several others. As always, please don't hesitate to contact me with your questions and comments.

Tina Gilliland, CAE
Director, Travel and Tourism Division

Discover Oklahoma

July Discover Oklahoma columns featured in the *Destinations* section of the Sunday edition of *The Oklahoman* included the following:

July 3—Vacationing in Tulsa

July 10—Summer Family Fun, Statewide

July 17—Swimming Holes/Picnic Spots, Statewide

July 24—Red Carpet Country

Discover Oklahoma airs at 6:30 p.m. Saturdays on KWTW-9 in OKC, KOTV-6 in Tulsa, and KSWO-7 in Lawton. Highlights for the July episodes included:

July 2—Drag Boat Races in OKC; Roman Nose hiking in Watonga; Glider adventure in Hinton

July 9—Amish Cheese House in Chouteau; Tiger Safari in Tuttle; Lake Wister State Park; Warehouse Willy's in Poteau

July 16—Blue Bell Creamery in Broken Arrow; Carousel in Elk City; Coney Island in Stillwater; Little River Zoo in Norman

July 23—Selman Bat Watch in Freedom; Adobe Grill in OKC; Island Fever Sailing School at Grand Lake; Coleman Theater in Miami

July 30—Beaver's Bend State Park; Abendigo's in Hochatown; Oklahoma's Panhandle

Helpful Tips Keep You Safe on Our Lakes

Summertime is the most popular time to visit Oklahoma's state parks and lakes, and it is our goal to ensure that visitors not only have a great time when visiting our parks and lakes, but that they also stay safe during these visits. To assist with that goal, OTRD has prepared the following list of safety tips for park goers.



Waverunner on Lake Keystone

Safety Tips

- All children in and around the water must wear a lifejacket.
- Inspect your boat, recreational vehicle or camper to ensure all systems are working properly and are up to code.
- If you are in need of medical attention or assistance from law enforcement know exactly where you are located so they will know where to respond. Mobile phones will not indicate your position.
- Have a first aid kit.
- Keep your valuables stowed in a safe place that is out of sight.

- Familiarize yourself with boating safety rules.
- Have water for your pets and keep them on a leash so not to disturb other guests.
- Dispose of glass bottles and trash.
- Use alcohol in moderation.
- Fireworks are strictly prohibited in state parks.

Our parks are natural resources that are meant to be enjoyed. Take the time to be a courteous and responsible guest so that everyone may equally enjoy the time on Oklahoma's lakes.

Morning Buzz—You Ask, We Answer

Tourism Promotion Tax: How is it Spent?

The Tourism Promotion Tax is a gross receipts tax of 1/10 of one percent on tourism-related businesses throughout the state. Businesses paying the tax are determined by state statute according to their Standard Industry Classification (SIC) commodity codes. The Tourism Promotion Tax was established in 1987 and currently generates approximately \$4.4 million annually for the Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department to use in advertising the state's tourism attractions and opportunities.

Although the department manages the advertising contract for the tourism campaign and oversees the day-to-day expenditures of the Tourism Tax, the industry is very involved in the process. By law, the Oklahoma Tourism Promo-

tion Advisory Committee – a group of 13 professionals representing different sectors of the state's tourism industry – meets monthly to advise and guide the department and its advertising agency of record. This relationship and input is crucial to the success of the state's tourism advertising efforts.

Tourism Tax revenue is invested in media purchases and in the production of multi-media advertising campaign elements. The majority of the funds are put into a spring tourism advertising campaign designed to promote summer travel to and within Oklahoma. A smaller campaign runs to promote fall travel. Eighty percent of the media dollars is spent outside of the state to attract travelers from regional markets while ap-

proximately 20 percent is spent to persuade Oklahomans to vacation in their home state.

According to two independent advertising effectiveness studies, leads generated by Oklahoma's tourism advertising have increased more than 50 percent since 2000. During the same period, return on investment for tourism advertising has experienced a dramatic increase of 97 percent with every \$1 spent on media advertising now returning \$12.30 in revenue to the state's economy.

An in-depth review of the state's tourism advertising and promotion efforts will be presented at the Oklahoma Governor's Conference on Tourism Oct. 2-3, 2005 in Tulsa.

OTRD Getting Settled Into New Offices

The dust is beginning to settle, boxes are getting unpacked, and we're all adjusting to our new location at First National Center in downtown Oklahoma City.

As many of you are already aware, the Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Dept. staff recently moved. The move was necessary due to plans for the Colcord Building to be remodeled into a boutique hotel.

Our new offices are located on the 6th floor of the First National Center, effective July 5th. Our new physical address is as follows:

OTRD

**First National Center
120 N. Robinson, Ste 600
Oklahoma City, OK 73102**

Please continue to use P.O. Box 52002, Oklahoma City, OK 73152 for mailing purposes.

A list of new phone numbers for the T&T staff can be accessed at

www.travelok.com/contact/phone_list.pdf.

All e-mail addresses for T&T staff remain the same.

For a complete list of phone numbers of OTRD staff at FNC, go to <http://tourism.state.ok.us/commission/NewPhoneList.pdf>.

Please know that we are making every effort to make the transition to the new office as smooth as possible with little to no disruption in service. How-

ever, some delays in responding to issues may be inevitable. We will make every effort to address any needs or concerns you may have as quickly as possible as we continue to set up our new offices.

We are moving onward and upward and look forward to showing off our new offices once we are settled.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Corley Fulfills New Role

As of July 1, Robert Corley assumed the position of fulfillment coordinator in the Travel & Tourism Division. After serving the department for almost two years as a travel counselor, he says he is excited about the opportunity.

Corley's responsibilities as fulfillment coordinator

include maintaining records in regard to brochure requests and processing requests received by telephone or Internet for individuals, bulk orders and international literature.

Corley says he has really enjoyed working for OTRD.

"I especially enjoyed doing the research involved in be-

ing a travel counselor. It required finding a great breadth of extensive information in a short period of time," he said.

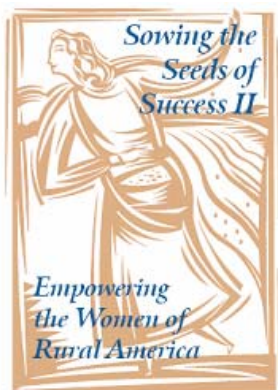
Although he currently lives in Oklahoma City, Corley has lived all over Oklahoma and says he considers the entire state his home.

Oklahoma TODAY

Oklahoma Today magazine celebrates 30 years of Eskimo Joe's in its July/Aug issue. Entrepreneur Stan Clark dishes on the success of his restaurant and clothing empire headquartered in Stillwater. The issue also features the newly renovated Philbrook gardens in Tulsa, J.M.'s Restaurant in Eufaula, and the migrating birds found all over the state.

Oklahoma Today is a general interest consumer magazine that focuses on the art, culture, history, people, and places of Oklahoma. The magazine is published bi-monthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November.

Pick up your copy at local newsstands, select Barnes & Noble book stores, at OTRD offices, or via subscription. For subscription information, call 800-777-1793 or visit oklahomatoday.com.



'Sowing the Seeds of Success' Seminar

ness Conference, set for Sept. 8 - 9 at the Quartz Mountain Resort and Conference Center in Lone Wolf, OK.

The workshop, hosted by Great Plains Resource Conservation & Development and USDA Risk Management Agency, is designed for women who continue to be vital players in the develop-

ment and maintenance of communities. It will address issues in agriculture and small business and the changing laws, regulations and taxes that affect them.

Additional information and registration forms are available on the Web at www.greatplainsrcd.org or by calling 580-832-3661.

Meet with other women dedicated to the development and preservation of their communities at the second annual Women in Agriculture & Small Busi-

Museum Makes National Register List

The Break O' Day Farm and Metcalfe Museum in Durham is now officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places as of June 16.

David Cunningham, museum director, said he is thrilled with the listing.

"I was completely overwhelmed by this national honor," said Cunningham. "I'm also sure that Augusta Metcalfe would be very pleased to know that the National Park Service considers her homestead wor-

thy of listing on the National Register."

The National Register is the federal government's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation. According to a letter from the State Historic Preservation Office of the Oklahoma Historical Society, the listing



Metcalfe Museum

"provides recognition and assists in preserving our nation's heritage."

The property, which is the historic homestead of the late pioneer artist Augusta Metcalfe, consists of a modern art facility and a number of historic and recreated buildings on 640 acres. It

is also listed in the State Register of Historic Places.

This is the most recent recognition for the Break O' Day Farm and Metcalfe Museum. In 2004, the National Endowment for the Humanities in Washington, D.C., designated the Metcalfe's collections preservation effort as a "We the People" project. Metcalfe also won a Redbud Award in 2004 for Outstanding New Event.

Destination Development Update

Route 66 Photo Contest

Calling all shutterbugs! Grab the camera and journey down Oklahoma's stretch of Route 66. The Oklahoma Historical Society's Oklahoma Route 66 Museum in Clinton is celebrating its 10th anniversary on Sept. 24 with a photography contest.

The winning entries will be displayed in the WOW! Room at the museum during the last week of November for the "Festival of Lights" annual event.

Blunck Studio, the Friends of the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum, and the Oklahoma Route 66 Association sponsor the contest. Photographers from Blunck Studio in Clinton will serve as judges.

Entry forms are available at the museum. For more information and official rules, call the museum at 580-323-7866 or e-mail rt66mus@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

Destination Development has been very busy traveling lately in an effort to assist communities and attractions in reaching their tourism potential. Destination Development Manager Barbie Elder recently toured attractions and met with community leaders in Frederick, Pawnee and Pawhuska.

The North West Oklahoma Artists Conference in Shattuck, hosted by the Oklahoma Arts Council and Shattuck Main Street, was a terrific success thanks to Melyn Johnson and Tonja Jones. This is the first in many conferences that will be held across the state to create an inventory and networking opportunity for Oklahoma events, attractions, museums, art galleries, and more.

The Agritourism Steering Committee met since the hiring of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture's new agritourism director, Francie Tolle. Tolle is currently working on liability issues as well as preparing a "How to Get Started"

notebook for interested producers.

Elder also visited Dr. Jim Horne and his staff at the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture. They operate a large multi-use farm as well as the Overstreet-Kerr Living History Farm, and have plans to expand and enhance the facilities to increase visitations.

Flying W Guest Ranch will open its new restaurant *very soon* - Miss Sassy's Café at Buffalo Gap. Beautiful custom tables and chairs and original art are part of the décor, and rumor has it "hero-plus" portions will be on the menu.

The Agency Action Coalition Community Response Teams went to Cheyenne on July 19 for a town meeting. They are headed for Talihina Aug. 11.

The 2005 Oklahoma Resource Conservation & Development Summit will be held Aug. 7-9 at the Cherokee Casino and Resort in Catoosa, with a great speaker lineup. Check www.okrcd.org for confer-

ence details. The OKRC&D program helps people in rural areas plan and carry out activities that increase conservation of natural resources, support economic development, and enhance the environment and standard of living in local communities.

The northwest Oklahoma's Cultural & Heritage Conference has been scheduled for Aug. 16-18 in Guymon.

Save the Date

Just a heads-up that the Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism is set for Oct. 3-4, 2005. It will be held at the Tulsa Renaissance Hotel and Conference Center in Tulsa.

The Redbud Awards banquet will be held at the Renaissance Hotel the evening of Oct. 3. Entries were due July 22.

Please watch your email for more information about the conference, as well as how to register.