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Tourism Momentum

Important Dates

Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Commission Meeting

9:30 a.m.

March 17, 2005
OKC Convention & Visitors Bureau
189 W. Sheridan
Oklahoma City

Oklahoma Tourism Promotion Advisory Committee Meeting

10:00 a.m.

March 10, 2005
Ackerman McQueen
1601 N.W. Expressway
Oklahoma City



Tourism Momentum

NEWS FOR STAKEHOLDERS IN OKLAHOMA TOURISM

Co-Op Program Offers Research Opportunities

The Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department is making available a co-op research opportunity. A meeting to provide detailed information on this program to those who have expressed an interest has been scheduled. Anyone with an interest is invited to attend as there is still availability for more participants.

This is an opportunity to conduct your own research – gathered from visitors while they are onsite. The information gathered will also be included in a larger state study.

Meeting attendees will learn about all aspects of the program, including customization of the research to fit your needs. We will have samples of hand-

held devices which will be used by research participants to gather data directly from visitors to the attractions. We anticipate the cost will be approximately \$1,000 for each project participant.

This meeting will be held at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Mar. 10 (immediately following the Tourism Promotion Advisory Committee meeting) at Ackerman McQueen, 1601 N.W. Expressway, 21st Floor, in Oklahoma City. Ackerman McQueen is located in The Tower, near Penn Square Mall. Parking is available on the upper level.

If you would like to attend, please RSVP to Mequeal Caldwell at 405-521-2406 by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Mar. 8.

“Morning Buzz” Sessions Continue

The Tourism Department is hosting a series of discussion meetings throughout the state to learn about new tourism developments and the issues important to those involved in the state’s tourism industry.

The first ‘Morning Buzz’ session was held Mar. 1st in McAlester with a turn-out of about 20 participants.

“The first session was definitely a success,” remarked Tina Gilliland, Travel & Tourism director. “There was a lot of information sharing, from discussion of legislative issues to land use issues to

marketing opportunities. I felt the session topics were relevant and helpful to participants as well as to our department.”

There are still several more sessions scheduled and others still pending, so mark your calendar to attend.

Sites and dates are:

- Mar. 8 - Tulsa (Downtown Doubletree, 616 W. 7th)
- Mar. 22 - Lawton (Leslie Powell Art Gallery at 620 SW D Avenue)
- Mar. 29 - Oklahoma City (ORGSIA at 3800 NW 36th)
- Apr. 5 - Woodward (High Plains Vo-Tech at 3921 34th Street)

State May Get Official Dinosaur Designation

Oklahoma lawmakers are suggesting a resolution that would designate an official state dinosaur under provisions of State Concurrent Resolution 3.

The official dinosaur would be the Acrocanthosaurus atokensis, whose remains were discovered in southeastern Oklahoma. The

first evidence of the dinosaur was found in Atoka County in the 1940s, with the most complete fossil skeleton of the species ever found excavated in McCurtain County in the ‘80s.

The measure will go to full Senate for approval.

**KFOR-TV
Channel 4, OKC**

Catch Tourism Deputy Director Hardy Watkins at 4:30 p.m. each Thursday on "For the Weekend" with Linda Cavanaugh for the latest information on Oklahoma events.

**March 10
Great Museums**

- Falconry Exhibit at Sam Noble Museum of Natural History—Norman
- Washington Irving Museum—Ripley
- Ida Dennie Willis Museum of Miniatures, Dolls & Toys—Tulsa

**March 17
Quirky Oklahoma**

- Be-Mar Tiny Chapel—Bixby
- Sod House—Aline
- Heritage Manor Bed & Breakfast—Aline
- Marlow Outlaws Museum—Marlow

**March 24
Ride Oklahoma**

- Ride Oklahoma—Del City
- Pawnee Bill Museum—Pawnee
- Ft. Sill—Lawton

**March 31
Oklahoma's in the Air**

- Enriques Restaurant—Ponca City
- Annie Oakies Runway Café—OKC
- Update on Will Rogers World Airport—OKC

Shumate Assumes Executive Assistant Position

Long-time Tourism Department employee Deb Shumate recently accepted the position of executive assistant for the Travel & Tourism Division.

Shumate brings 14 years of experience to her position, having served as TRIP manager and most recently as database coordinator for the division.

Shumate will handle such day-to-day duties as administrative support, office management, schedule and



Deb Shumate

meeting coordination as well as serving as an informational resource.

"I'm thrilled to have Deb serve in the position of executive assistant for the division," said T&T Director Tina Gilliland. "With her extensive experience in state policies and procedures, as well as her excel-

lent administrative and time management skills, she will continue to be a real asset to our staff as well as the industry in her new position."

Shumate was born in Muscatine, IA and is a graduate of Robert Morris College in Carthage, IL. After college, Shumate joined the Navy as an Aviation Administrationman and served three years in Guam. Her hobbies include reading, movies, traveling and baking.

Tulsa Business Receives National Accolade

Tulsa's Incredible Pizza Co. was recently named one of the Top Five Family Entertainment Centers in the World by the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions.

The 96,000-square-foot center features a buffet and salad bar, indoor Go-Kart track, miniature golf, bumper cars, several bowling lanes and more than



100 nonviolent video games.

Owner Rick Barsness credits the franchise's success to two things: the food and the atmosphere.

Incredible Pizza Co. has sold 40 franchise stores in 14 months.

Call Center Extends Hours

Beginning Mar. 7, the Travel & Tourism Call Center will extend its business hours from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.

This will ensure that potential travelers responding to the spring advertising campaign receive expert service and advice from a trained travel counselor.

Uncover the Mystery of the Incas or Hike Oklahoma Trails — All in One State

Each Sunday learn more about Oklahoma by picking up the Destinations section of The Oklahoman. OTRD's weekly "Discover Oklahoma" column features information on exciting places and events across Oklahoma.

Warmer weather is almost upon us, so what better way to enjoy it than with a good hike in a beautiful Oklahoma state park?

Get a head start by reading the Mar. 6 column on Oklahoma hiking trails.

Fascinated with history and mystery? Then read the Mar. 13 article on the Machu Picchu exhibit at the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa.



The Gilcrease Museum is one of only six venues to

host this national touring exhibition, "Machu Picchu: Unveiling the Mystery of the Incas."

Searching for something to do? Then make the rounds to several awe-inspiring and educational exhibits being held across the state during the month of March, including one on the Lewis & Clark expedition. All to be featured in the Mar. 20 edition of the Sunday Oklahoman.

Nine Oklahoma Properties Added to National Register

The State Historic Preservation Office announced that nine new properties from Oklahoma have been added to the National Register of Historic Places. The new listings include sites associated with the Cherokee Trail of Tears, a historic district, prehistoric archaeological sites, and individual properties that represent a variety of historic themes significant in Oklahoma's history.

Properties added include:

- Reverend Jesse Bushyhead gravesite near Westville
- Illinois Campground near Tahlequah
- Kenwood Historic District in Enid
- Two prehistoric archaeological sites in Harper County—Patsy's Island and Smith No. 2
- Antioch School District No. 15 in Garvin County
- Cherokee Friends Church located in the county seat of Alfalfa County
- Phillips 66 Station No. 473 near Whittier Square in Tulsa
- Campus Fire Station at Oklahoma State University

These nine properties bring the total number of listings from Oklahoma in the National Register to

1,065. The listing of Adair County's Reverend Bushyhead gravesite brings closer the goal of having at least five listings from each county by November 2007.

For more information on these or other National Register properties, contact Jim Gabbert at 405-522-4478 or by email at jgabbert@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

Oklahoma Towns Receive Honors, Recognition

Stillwater Voted "Oklahoma's Friendliest Town"

Stillwater was voted "Oklahoma's Friendliest Town" in 2004 by readers of *Oklahoma Living Magazine*.

With an abundance of attractions and numerous, unique "home-grown" restaurants, Stillwater is an instant favorite.

Stillwater's wide variety of entertainment options include star-studded concerts at the Tumbleweed Dance Hall and Concert Arena to

shopping in the historic downtown or Campus Corner areas, to picnicking or taking in a sunset at one of five lakes.

No visit to Stillwater is complete without a stop to Eskimo Joe's for a plate of their world-famous cheese fries and colorful t-shirts. And golf enthusiasts will find the area's five top-rated golf courses challenging.

For the best in fun and hospitality, make a visit to Stillwater today.

Shawnee Gets 'Preserve America' Designation

Shawnee was honored recently when Mrs. Laura Bush designated it among the nation's newest *Preserve America* communities and the first Oklahoma community to receive this special recognition.



The *Preserve America* initiative is a new White House effort to encourage

and support community efforts for the preservation and enjoyment of America's cultural and natural heritage.

Shawnee's *Preserve America* application featured downtown revitalization, education programs, and heritage tourism initiatives as justification for the designation.



Discover Oklahoma will be pre-empted during the month of March due to the NCAA Basketball Tournaments (March Madness) except for the Mar. 5 show. Catch it at 6:30 p.m. on KWTW-9 (OKC), KOTV-6 (Tulsa) and KSWO-7 (Lawton).

March 5

Featuring Falconry Exhibit at Sam Noble Museum of Natural History in Norman; Native American Gallery & Gifts in Bethany; Choctaw Tribal Headquarters in Durant; Choctaw Walking Trail; Red Slough in Idabel; Windmill Museum in Shattuck.

Travel Development Activities, Upcoming Conference

Travel Development has the following shows scheduled in March:

Mar. 4-6: Dallas Vacation Leisure & Outdoor Show at Dallas Marketplace;

Mar. 11-12: Lawton-Ft. Sill Travel Show at Ft. Sill PX;

Mar. 28-30: African-American Travel Confer-

ence in Louisville, KY;

Mar. 30-Apr. 2: CrossSphere Spring Meet in Sacramento, CA;

Mar. 29-30: Oklahoma Community Institute, Reed Center in Midwest City.

Also, the Cultural Crossroads Conference III "Discovering Tomorrow's Rural Economy Through

Arts & Culture" is scheduled for Mar. 31—Apr. 1 at the Student Union of Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton. Featured speaker is Becky Anderson from HandMade in America.

For more information or to register, contact Les Brelsford at 918-465-2361 Ext. 334 or email at lbrelsford@eosc.edu.