



March 2007

### **Meeting International Tour Operators at Home and Abroad**

Maureen Droz attended the Bank Travel Show in Jacksonville, Fla., Feb. 14-17 where she met with 50 bank travel tour operators and the BIT Show in Milan, Italy, Feb. 20-26 where she met with 26 tour operators and journalists. Maureen also recently attended the ITB Sales Mission in Berlin, Germany, and the French Sales Mission in Paris, France, where she worked with staff from Rocky Mountain International (RMI) in meeting with tour operators from those countries. Contact Maureen Droz at (605) 773-3301 or [maureen.droz@state.sd.us](mailto:maureen.droz@state.sd.us) for more information.

### **Media Team Blitzes Denver and Minneapolis**

Wanda Romkema, Buddy Seiner and Lesa Jarding of the Office of Tourism Media Team, along with Jade Temple of the Deadwood CVB, traveled to Denver, Colo., March 12-15 to speak with various media outlets at pre-arranged meetings. The team addressed topics specific to each writer's preferences and specialties, and created a call to action with each writer, for example, asking them to make South Dakota the topic of their next article, or asking them to visit South Dakota on a familiarization tour. On a similar blitz, the Media Team, along with Jeff Hanson of Lawrence & Schiller will travel to Minneapolis, Minn., March 26-29. For more information, contact Wanda Romkema at (605) 773-3301 or [wanda.romkema@state.sd.us](mailto:wanda.romkema@state.sd.us).

### **Trade Sales Team on the Road**

The Trade Sales and Marketing Team partnered with the Black Hills, Badlands & Lakes Association; the Rapid City CVB; the Deadwood CVB and the Watertown CVB to conduct a trade blitz in Denver, Colo., March 12-15. Tourism officials and partners met with a total of 20 tour operators and travel agencies to increase knowledge about South Dakota and entice folks to make travel plans to the land of Great Faces and Great Places. The group is also coordinating a similar blitz in Minneapolis, Minn., March 26-29. Contact Maureen Droz at (605) 773-3301 or [maureen.droz@state.sd.us](mailto:maureen.droz@state.sd.us) for more information.

### **South Dakota Represented in Denmark and Sweden**

Vicky Engelhaupt with the Trade Sales and Marketing Team attended the Scandinavian Training Mission throughout Denmark and Sweden Feb. 26-March 6 to offer training sessions for key USA sales staff of tour and travel companies. The goal was to increase Scandinavian visitation to South Dakota and the region. Other states attending the mission included Montana, North Dakota and Wyoming as well as a representative from Rocky Mountain International (RMI). For more information, contact Vicky Engelhaupt at (605) 773-3301 or [vicky.engelhaupt@state.sd.us](mailto:vicky.engelhaupt@state.sd.us).

### **Planning for Peak Season in Full Swing**

A tiered approach to marketing is being used by South Dakota Tourism again this year. Tier 1 markets include Chicago, Ill.; Eau Claire/La Crosse, Wis.; Green Bay, Wis.; Milwaukee, Wis. and Charleston, W.Va. Included in the Tier 2 markets are Des Moines, Iowa; Mankato, Minn.; Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minn. and Omaha, Neb. Tier 3 markets include Bismarck, N.D., Fargo, N.D., Sioux City, Iowa and Sioux Falls, S.D. Tourism is also co-oping with Deadwood in the markets of Denver and Ft. Collins/Greeley, Colo.; Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minn.; and Casper and Cheyenne, Wyo.

In addition, the Office of Tourism is adding more partners and niche magazines to the successful Giant Step program and partnering with an Internet behavioral marketing company to target potential visitors on the Web. Contact Nicole Gall at (605) 773-3301 or [nicole.gall@state.sd.us](mailto:nicole.gall@state.sd.us) for more information. Or, visit the Office of Tourism's industry Web site, [www.SDVisit.com](http://www.SDVisit.com).

### Office of Tourism Research Results

As in previous months, February showed an increased interest in traveling and vacationing in South Dakota. There was a 22 percent increase in telephone inquiries and a 38.1 percent increase in mail inquiries. Web and email inquiries dropped by four percent, however, the success of the monthly Travelsmart E-newsletter continued to grow, with a 10 percent increase in people actually following the link to the newsletter.

Lawrence & Schiller compiled and reported findings from February focus groups conducted to better understand what people think of South Dakota and what messaging best influences them. The states involved in the focus group were Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin. Respondents reported that they preferred "a destination that presents local flavor and hospitality." In addition, all groups reported utilizing the Internet at some point during their travel planning. These were just a few of the notable findings. Detailed results of these focus groups will be reported in the print version of the *Tourism FYI* coming in April.

The 2006 Spring Season Report from the Center of Tourism Research was presented to the Office of Tourism in February. Travel activity in South Dakota was reported as "generally positive." The complete report will be downloadable from <http://www.sdvisit.com/tools/research>. Contact Kirk Hulstein at (605) 773-3301 or [kirk.hulstein@state.sd.us](mailto:kirk.hulstein@state.sd.us) for more information.

### Summer Travel Specials

If you haven't put together your summer **Travel Special**, don't forget! For only \$35, travel specials are being uploaded to [www.TravelSD.com](http://www.TravelSD.com) now. You may send your travel specials to Melissa Bump at [melissa.bump@state.sd.us](mailto:melissa.bump@state.sd.us). Or, if you need more information, feel free to call Melissa at (605) 773-3301 or visit <http://www.sdvisit.com/programs/coop/travelspecials>.

### Dates to Remember/Upcoming Events:

Mar. 17: **Annual Indians and Pioneers Tourism and Marketing Conference**, Gordon, Neb.  
Mar. 26-29: **Media and Trade Blitzes**, Minneapolis, Minn.  
Apr. 12-14: **AFCI Locations Tradeshow**, Santa Monica, Calif.  
Apr. 17-18: **African American Tourism Conference**, Indianapolis, Ind.  
Apr. 17-18: **Governor's Office of Economic Development Conference**, Pierre  
Apr. 20-21: **RMI Summit Meeting**, Los Angeles, Calif.  
Apr. 21-25: **TIA Pow Wow**, Los Angeles, Calif.  
Apr. 28-May 3: **Information Center Fam**, northwest South Dakota  
TBA: **Peak Season Press Conference**  
May 2: **West River Lit Swap**, Rapid City  
May 3: **East River Lit Swap**, Mitchell  
May 12: **Information Centers Open**  
May 12-20: **See America Week**  
May 21-26: **See South Dakota Week**

\*\*\* [www.TravelSD.com](http://www.TravelSD.com) \*\*\* [www.SDVisit.com](http://www.SDVisit.com) \*\*\* [www.2010Initiative.com](http://www.2010Initiative.com) \*\*\* [www.MediaSD.com](http://www.MediaSD.com) \*\*\*  
\*\*\* [www.FilmSD.com](http://www.FilmSD.com) \*\*\* [www.TourSDakota.com](http://www.TourSDakota.com) \*\*\*

South Dakota Office of Tourism \*\*\* 711 E. Wells Ave., Pierre, SD 57501 \*\*\* (605) 773-3301 \*\*\*  
[sdinfo@state.sd.us](mailto:sdinfo@state.sd.us)