

# GAMG 2011

Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries Newsletter

VOLUME 32 • ISSUE 3 • SUMMER 2011

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## *President's Message*

### **Brent Tharp**

I have just returned from the annual meeting of the American Association of Museums, whose theme this year was the Museum of Tomorrow. This seemed an apt subject, since we are seeing such rapid changes in the technologies available to interpretation and education partnered with some of the most significant economic changes that are changing the models of museum sustainability. It is hard to plan with some of these unknowns. However, any consideration of the museum of tomorrow, though, must consider the museum visitor/supporter of tomorrow and for this we have some clues to help guide us.

The Museum Visitors and Supporters of Tomorrow are the Millennial generation, those currently aged 18 to 29, who grew into adulthood at the beginning of the new millennium. The Pew Research Center describes them as the most diverse generation ever born in the United States; the most educated generation in American history; and easily the most connected generation of all time. A recent study by PGAV Destinations worked to gain insight into “what makes these travelers tick.” Some of their conclusions are:

1. Millennials are highly influenced by friends and family in selecting places to visit. Two-thirds of them will visit places recommended by friends and family – significantly more than their older counterparts. Having a story to tell is important. Destinations need to accommodate Millennials' need to broadcast their experiences – don't ignore the digital networks.
2. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of Millennials stated a strong preference for learning something new when they travel. However, they also showed a keen sense for the types of learning experiences they wish to have. Millennials' stated clear preferences for experiences that are fun and entertaining (78%), immersive(70%), and interactive and hands-on (68%). And in all of these categories, they showed a markedl stronger preference than their older counterparts. This diverse group wants to learn something new and exhibits a variety of learning styles. Passive experiences will not appeal to Millennials. Use immersive, interactive and entertaining tactics.
3. Millennials represent a significant societal change in the desire of travelers to incorporate volunteerism and sustainable practices in destinations. Other surveys show that this group is single-handedly fueling the Green trend. Millennials are not your traditional guests. They do not take leisure trips “just because,” but are looking for something that resonates with their need to make a difference.

If you are interested in more detail about this survey, you can find the complete report online at <http://www.pgavdestinations.com/insights/>. Hope you all have exciting summer visitation.

## Administrative Director's Report



**Michele Rodgers**

This spring's intense weather has helped to remind us that cultural institutions must plan for disasters of all types. In addition to resources available through the Georgia Department of Archives and History, free information is available to the state's museums, galleries, and related institutions through Heritage Preservation, The National Institute for Conservation. Visit this organization's web page to find a PDF file with information and tools to help your institution plan and prepare for an emergency ([www.heritagepreservation.org/PROGRAMS/TFPlanPrepare/html](http://www.heritagepreservation.org/PROGRAMS/TFPlanPrepare/html)).

Additionally, if a major disaster occurs in your area, visit HP's Heritage Emergency National Task Force's "Information on Major Disasters" page ([www.heritagepreservation.org/PROGRAMS/TI](http://www.heritagepreservation.org/PROGRAMS/TI)) for valuable contacts and response resources and to report damage to a cultural institution or its collection.

## NEW GAMG MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

As one of GAMG's newest members, the Shields-Ethridge Farm is an outstanding example of excellence in informal



learning. This outdoor agricultural museum in Jefferson, Georgia, is an educational and interpretive facility that encompasses numerous well preserved buildings in a rural landscape. Featuring an 1866 house, two room school, various outbuildings, a cotton gin, grist mill, barns, and much more, the Shields-Ethridge Farm uses these structures and their stories to offer teacher resources that align with

Georgia Performance Standards. Additionally, guided tours, self-guided walking tours and an Iphone App all help to make the site accessible to many more visitors.

Shields-Ethridge Farm hosts an annual "Mule Day," the third Saturday of May, when the farm's agricultural heritage is celebrated with demonstrations, visits with farm animals, bluegrass, and BBQ. For more information, visit [www.shieldsethridgefarminc.com](http://www.shieldsethridgefarminc.com).



## WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

In order to build a community that supports your museum, it is important to include local media outlets in your communications. Be sure to designate one person at your museum who can provide material to media sources and be the in-house media contact. The greater and more frequent stream of material that is sent to media sources, the better. News releases, public service announcements and photographs are excellent items to use to promote your institution. Stories with local angles, or museum stories that have a connection to current events have the most potential for making it into print (or onto the radio).

Develop a press kit for distributing to reporters and for posting on your website. This kit should provide

a reporter with all the information he or she might need to create a story about your museum. Basic items in the kit should include:

- A press release on the program or exhibit you would like covered.
- Background information on the museum and short biographical sketches of key employees.
- Quotations from those connected to the event you would like covered.
- A page of frequently asked questions and responses regarding the event and the museum.
- Any brochures or materials related to the event.
- Any press clippings that are pertinent.

## GEORGIA ARCHIVES MONTH - OCTOBER 2011



Photograph of 4 generations of women in a Georgia Family, taken in 1920-21. From the Leona Strickland Hudson collection at the Valdosta State University Archives and Special Collections. The baby is Leona Strickland, with her mother Rosa Hill Strickland, her grandmother Annie Lee Hill, and her great grandmother, in the middle, Rosaline McCann. The collection of 100 boxes contains letters, images and artifacts documenting many generations of a Georgia family, with items from 1860 to 2008 detailing Georgia's history, women's history, military history, and early travel.

### *Georgia Archives Month October 2011*

#### *What is Georgia Archives Month?*

Archives Month is a way to celebrate the value of Georgia's historical records, publicize the many ways historical records enrich our lives, and recognize those who maintain our communities' historical records. This is the ideal time to call attention to your organization or local government, and its work in preserving Georgia's documentary heritage. The celebration will be publicized across the state through a Governor's proclamation, a poster sent to cultural institutions across the state, our new Facebook page, our web site, newspaper articles, and events at various repositories.

#### *How Can I Celebrate?*

We encourage you to think of ways in which your organization or local government can celebrate Archives Month in your community. Create an exhibit, host a reception, give tours, write articles, or develop special programs – let your imagination be the limit! To help you, the Society of American Archivists (SAA) has created a web site with several resources including a sample press release. For additional ideas, please see previous years' activities pages at [GAM past activities](#) and the [Council of State Archivists \(CoSA\)](#). If you will provide information on your planned activity, we will be happy to help publicize your event on the Georgia Archives Month new Facebook page and [web site](#). To submit information about your planned event, please send them to [ga.archivesmonth@gmail.com](mailto:ga.archivesmonth@gmail.com).

#### *Need Help?*

For additional assistance or information, please contact [ga.archivesmonth@gmail.com](mailto:ga.archivesmonth@gmail.com) or co-chair Bridget Lerette at 404-920-7693.

#### *Sponsors*

Georgia Historical Records Advisory Board | Georgia Archives | Office of Secretary of State Brian P. Kemp | Society of Georgia Archivists | Georgia Library Association | Walter Hopkins Company | The Coca-Cola Company | Hollinger Metal Edge Inc. | Digital Library of Georgia | Georgia Records Association

## FOCUS ON CUSTOMER SERVICE

In order to stand out from the crowd vying for the consumer's time and money, museums must offer excellent customer service. The trick is in knowing how to provide it. Here are some tips that might help.

What is your organization's mission? Once you answer this question and develop a plan that helps you reach your target audience, you are on the path to knowing what you need to offer to guests.

Your staff will be key, and since museums are ultimately about educating people, we need to:

- Take time to hire the right people and educate them about your mission
- Train, train, train these people and give them the support they need
- Make sure each employee knows how valuable he or she is to the organization
- Empower staff members to make decisions

Create a service environment. Good signage, friendly, smiling faces at the front desk, warm voices on the telephone, a website that is current and easily navigated are all important aspects of creating a welcoming museum. Not sure if your museum is reaching this goal? Ask friends or family members to serve as “secret shoppers”

and have them visit your museum, unannounced, and test your “service environment.” Be sure to encourage them to be objective and honest in their feedback to you.

Is your museum a comfortable learning environment? Develop ways for visitors to engage all of their senses. Mix interactive spaces with reflective spaces. Give people plenty of places to sit!

The best way to know how to provide good customer service is to ask your visitors what they want. Don't rely solely on comment cards, but actually talk with your visitors. Find out what motivates them, why they chose to visit your museum, what did they expect and did you meet their expectations. When you take the time to build relationships with your visitors, they not only provide you with important information, but they become more engaged in your institution.

Resources:

*The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business is a Stage* by James H. Gilmore and B. Joseph Pine  
*Good to Great and The Social Sectors: Why Business Thinking is Not the Answer* by Jim Collins  
*Handle With Care: Motivating and Retaining Employees* by Barbara Glanz

## GAMG ANNUAL MEETING 2012

The folks in Milledgeville are excitedly preparing for the GAMG annual meeting, to be held there January 18 – 20, 2012. Andalusia, the home of Flannery O'Connor is getting fluffed, the recently renovated Old Governor's Mansion is being readied, and numerous other local cultural institutions are preparing to welcome GAMG members in fine fashion. Now we need your help! Session proposals for the conference are due now. Topics ranging from Internships to Social Media to Making Money have been proposed and panel members are needed to address these and other topics. If you can assist, visit the GAMG website ([www.gamg.org](http://www.gamg.org)) and view the session proposal form, complete it and return it to Dr. Catherine Lewis at [clewis1@kennesaw.edu](mailto:clewis1@kennesaw.edu) or call 678-797-2083. Get a jump on conference arrangements. Make your hotel reservations now!

**The host hotel for the Milledgeville conference is :**

**Fairfield Inn & Suites Milledgeville  
Conference rate is \$80 plus tax  
478-452-5202 or 1-800-Marriot**

*Be sure to mention Georgia Association of  
Museums & Galleries for special rate.*

**Reservations must be made  
by December 17, 2011.**

## Upcoming Visitor Studies Association Conference

The Visitor Studies Association is an organization devoted to enhancing and understanding visitor experiences in museums, zoos, galleries, and other informal learning settings. The VSA offers workshops, tools to help plan professional development in visitor studies, guidelines for conducting ethical research, a journal, links to other resources, and an annual meeting. This year, the 24th Annual VSA Conference will be held July 24-27 in Chicago.

Pre-Conference workshops are open to non-VSA members and cover everything from “Evaluation 101” to the most up-to-date techniques. For more information, contact VSA Executive Director Erik Ledbetter, at 301-762-1450 or [info@visitorstudies.org](mailto:info@visitorstudies.org).

## Girl Scout Badges

Ever thought of developing programs around Girl Scout Badges? Some of Georgia's museums and galleries have already discovered what a great partnership this can be. If you haven't explored this option, the Archives of the Girl Scouts of Greater Atlanta has made it a little easier for you. Archives volunteer Pamela Nye has established a blog to keep users up to date on the organization's collection and events taking place at the Archives. Additionally, badge requirements will be posted on the blog in order to make it easy for you to develop programs that will align with GS badges. The blog can be found at [www.girlscoutsmakehistory.wordpress.com](http://www.girlscoutsmakehistory.wordpress.com) or by contacting [pam@phoenixrd.com](mailto:pam@phoenixrd.com).

## AASLH Scholarships

AASLH's Small Museums Committee is offering scholarships to any AASLH members who are full-time, part-time, paid, or volunteer employees of small museums. The \$500 scholarship will cover the cost of

registration. Any remaining funds will offset travel and/or lodging expenses.

To qualify, the applicant must work for a museum with a budget of \$250,000 or less and either be an individual member of AASLH or work for an institutional member. The application form is available at [www.aaslh.org/SmallMuseums](http://www.aaslh.org/SmallMuseums).

Deadline for Applications is June 30, 2011. Award notification will be made by July 15. For questions, please contact Bruce Teeple, Small Museum Scholarship Subcommittee Chair, at [mongopawn44@hotmail.com](mailto:mongopawn44@hotmail.com)

## Becoming a Patron of the Cultural Arts

Patrons of the cultural arts were once only the very wealthy and powerful, kings and queens and such. Today, anyone can be a patron. Through websites such as Kickstarter, [IndieGoGo.com](http://IndieGoGo.com) and [Crowdrise.com](http://Crowdrise.com), artists, film makers and nonprofits can tap into resources through “crowdfunding” – soliciting small donations from a large pool of people. More details on this inventive revenue source can be found in an article by Gus Sentementes in the June 13, 2011 edition of The Baltimore Sun.

## Getting the Word Out!

As we continue to grasp the impact of living in a digital age, surveys abound that can help us learn how to use digital tools, such as social networks, to get the word out about our institutions. Information provided through an April 2011 study from ROI Research and Performics shows that the highest percentages (28%) of online consumers say companies should communicate via social networks once a month or less, while almost as many (26%) say once a week or less. A similar survey went on to note that the most-frequently cited reason Facebook users give for “unliking” a brand is that it posts too frequently. Want to know more about consumers and social networking behaviors, visit the website [www.marketingcharts.com](http://www.marketingcharts.com), for free information about marketing issues.

# GAMG



# 2011

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## NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS SINCE MARCH 2011

### Institutional

1st African Baptist Church  
6th Cavalry Museum  
Albany Museum of Art  
Andalusia  
Andersonville National Historic Site  
Atlanta History Center  
Bellevue  
Blue & Gray Museum  
Bowdon Historical Society  
Butts County Historical Society  
Calhoun/Gordon Arts Council  
Cannonball House  
Church-Waddell-Brumby House Museum  
Crawford Long Museum  
Coastal Georgia Historical Society  
Coastal Heritage Society  
Cultural Arts Council of Douglasville/Douglas Co.  
Elachee Nature Science Center  
Erskine Caldwell Birthplace and Museum  
Fernbank Science Center  
Foxfire Museum & Heritage Center  
Funk Heritage Center  
Georgia Humanities Council  
Heritage Station Museum  
Hickory Hill

Historic Columbus Foundation  
Historic Oakland Foundation  
Isaiah Davenport House Museum  
Jimmy Carter Library  
Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace  
Laurens County Historical Society  
Lucy Craft Laney Museum  
Marietta Cobb Museum of Art  
Museum of Arts & Sciences  
Okefenokee Chamber of Commerce  
Old Governor's Mansion  
Polk County Historical Society Museum  
Root House  
Shields Ethridge Heritage Farm  
Ships of the Sea Maritime Museum  
Southern Museum of Civil War & Locomotive History  
Steffen Thomas Museum of Art  
Telfair Museum of Art  
Tellus  
The Lodges at Banning Mills  
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Thronateeska Heritage Center  
Tunnel Hill Heritage Center  
Ty Cobb Museum  
Uncle Remus Museum

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