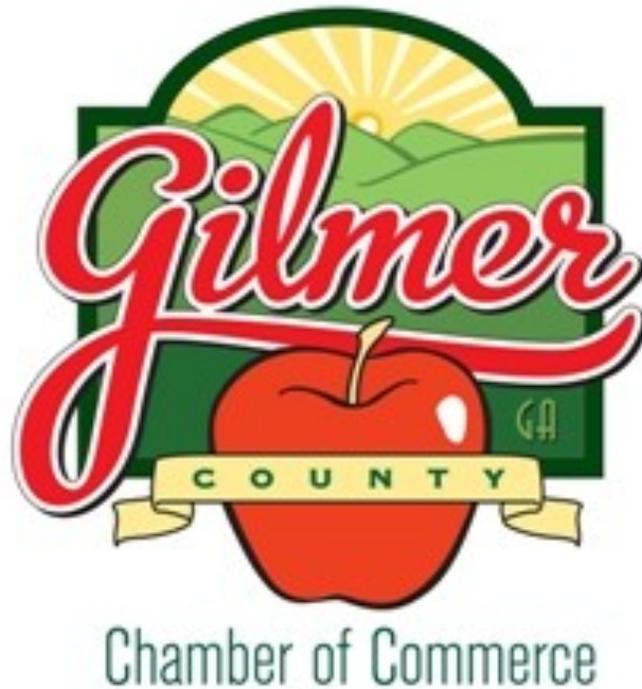


Report to Gilmer County Board of Commissioners

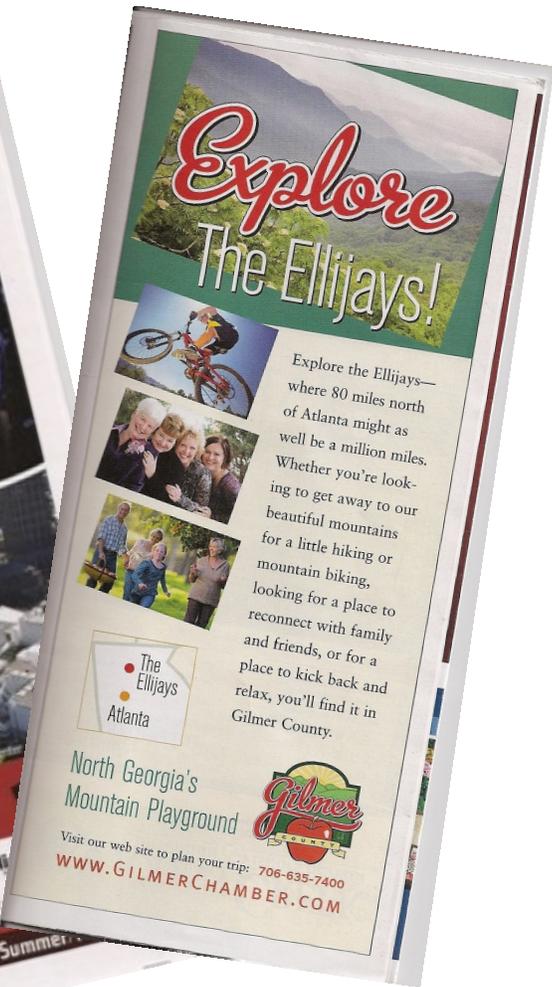


Q2 2010
Presented July 8, 2010

Hotel/Motel Tax funding for Tourism Product Promotion and Development

- **Continued services of b2 Ideas (monthly reports attached)**
- **Great Lakes of Georgia initiative**
 - * **Website**
 - * **Participation in the FLW Cup Outdoor Expo & Family Fun Zone at Gwinnett Center Aug 5-8**
 - * **Go Fish Pavilion in Perry, GA grand opening in October**
- **Feature on Carter's Lake set to run in Jan/Feb issue of Boating magazine. On newsstands for 14 weeks.**
- **Represented Gilmer County at the state welcome centers in Tallapoosa and Ringgold during Georgia on My Mind Days**
- **Appalachian Gateways Group (Pickens, Gilmer, Fannin, Union, & Towns county) reprinted pad map**
- **www.facebook.com/theellijays has 450 fans and growing**
- **Harrison Park steering committee has made it through several rounds for a \$100,000 DNR grant. Original application was made Nov 2009**
- **Highly successful Taste of Ellijay and Independence Day celebration**
- **August 14 will kick-off Second Saturday Block Party. Building on the success of the Independence Day celebration downtown. We will host live music, cruise-in, and extended store hours**
- **Letter of support for IMBA Ride Center**
- **Adding a monthly Explore the Ellijays e-newsletter. Will be sent to our email data base of those who have requested more information on our area. We are concentrating more on database building activities like our partnership with Mills Marketing.**
- **AAA office in Nashville– Brochure distribution through Mills Marketing**
- **August– Paige will attend the Governor's Conference on Tourism in Athens**

Additional Printed Materials (April-June)



Additional Printed Materials (April -June)



17 Mountain biking in Ellijay, Ga., the "mountain biking capital of the world," p. 37.

where GEORGIA ON YOUR MIND

30 things we love | Georgia

- Georgia's fabulous state parks (www.gastateparks.org).
- The University of Georgia celebrating its 225th anniversary—go Dawgsl!
- Panning for gold in Dahlonega, site of Georgia's first gold rush.
- Catching a show at the historic Springer Opera House in Columbus, p. 26.
- 234-plus species of birds in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, p. 33.
- White water rafting down the Chattooga River, p. 34.
- Macon's historic Cannonball House, named for damage sustained during the Civil War, p. 19.
- Picking strawberries at Southern Belle Farm in McDonough (770-898-0999).
- Earthenware, face jugs and more at the Folk Pottery Museum of Northeast Georgia (706-878-3300).
- Going back in time at the Foxfire Museum & Heritage Center in Rabun County, p. 37.
- Seeing Princess Diana's wedding dress up close at the Atlanta Civic Center through June (404-523-6275).
- Trout fishing in North Georgia—there's more than 4,000 miles of streams.
- The mudpit belly flop, the hubcap hurl, dumpster diving and the armpit serenade—yep, it's the Summer Redneck Games in East Dublin July 10, p. 31.
- All the new babies at Zoo Atlanta—orangutans, warthogs, gorillas, giraffes, kangaroos and more, p. 17.
- Sitting under the leaves of Lover's Oak, a 900-year-old tree in Brunswick, p. 35.
- Swimming, boating, fishing and water skiing Georgia's many lakes, p. 36.
- Mountain biking in Ellijay, Ga., the "mountain biking capital of the world," p. 37.
- Spying "Goats on the Roof" (literally!) in Clayton (706-782-2784).
- Watching the world's greatest waterskiers and wakeboarders at Callaway Gardens May 28-30, p. 29.
- Visiting Jimmy Carter's family's restored 1930s peanut farm in Americus, p. 20.
- The new sea lion exhibit at Georgia Aquarium, p. 16.
- Sipping your way along Georgia's Wine Trail, p. 36.
- Climbing 178 steps to the top of the Tybee Island Lighthouse, p. 35.
- Baseball season—minor and major leagues, p. 25.
- The new Anne Frank exhibit on display in Sandy Springs, p. 37.
- Visiting the home of Girl Scouts founder Juliette Gordon Low in Savannah, p. 20.
- The Chief Vann House, one of the best-preserved Native American homes in the country, p. 19.
- Watching the trains go by at the Folkston Tunnel (www.folkston.com).
- Looking for seashells on Driftwood Beach on Jekyll Island, p. 35.
- Georgia's 12 beautiful barrier islands, p. 35.

Other Places We Love
 Where® is an international network of magazines first published in 1936 and distributed in over 4,000 leading hotels in more than 40 places around the world. Look for us when you visit any of the following cities, or plan ahead for your next trip by visiting us online at www.wheretraveler.com
UNITED STATES Alaska & Yukon, Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Charleston, Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Georgia, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Maui, Miami, Minneapolis/St. Paul, New Orleans, New York, Northern Virginia, Oahu, Orange County (CA), Orlando, Philadelphia, Phoenix/Scottsdale, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, St. Louis, Washington, D.C.
ASIA Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore
CANADA Calgary, Canadian Rockies, Edmonton, Halifax, Mississauga, Muskoka/Parry Sound, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, Victoria, Whistler, Winnipeg
EUROPE Budapest, London, Moscow, Paris, Rome, St. Petersburg

©CHRIS HODINAK/GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GDED); GEORGIA AQUARIUM; GWINNETT BEAVER; SPRINGER OPERA HOUSE; GOATS ON THE ROOF

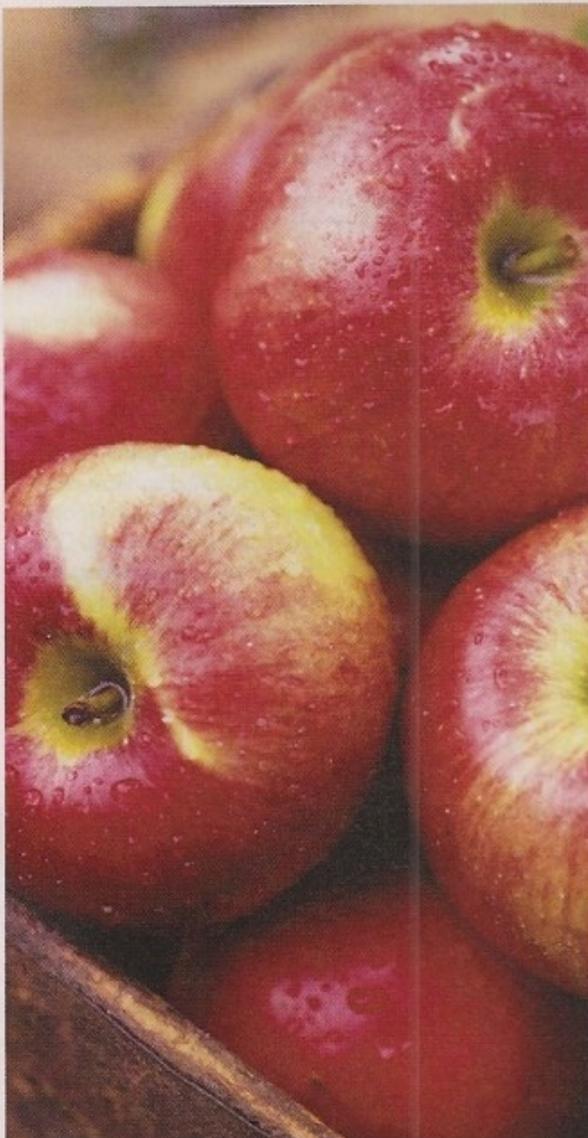
12 Trout fishing in North Georgia—there's more than 4,000 miles of streams.



Additional Printed Materials (April-June)

the
guide

Navigate



Take a Bite Out of Ellijay

Nestled in the Appalachian Mountains and book-ended by more than 100,000 acres of public land, Gilmer County is Georgia's largest outdoor playground. We asked the Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce for its picks for the area's 10 best attractions and activities: **10)** Lace up and hit Benton MacKaye or the Appalachian Trails; **9)** Visit the 62 miles of undeveloped shoreline of Carters Lake; **8)** Grab a paddle and take to the waters of the Cartecay, Ellijay or Coosawattee Rivers; **7)** Enjoy arts, crafts, shopping, dining and local lore in downtown Ellijay; **6)** Try your hand at "glamping" or glamorous camping; **5)** Check out Amicalola Falls, the tallest waterfall east of the Mississippi River; **4)** Test your fly-fishing skills with a local guide; **3)** Spend some quality family time in a mountain view or creek-side cabin; **2)** Bring your mountain bike, and explore the 100-plus miles of world-class trails; **1)** Visit the numerous apple orchards that line Apple Alley. 368 Craig St., 706-635-7400, www.gilmerchamber.org.

Community & Economic Development

- **Economic Development Authority**
 - * Meet June 25th, Meeting July 9 & 23
 - * Congressman Tom Graves presenting on July 9
 - * Working towards Georgia Work Ready certification
 - * Hosting existing industries lunch in August
 - * Working with Chamber Community & Economic Development Council to find synergy in projects
- **Attended GEDA spring workshop**
- **Update on Atlanta office visits**
 - * Visited Georgia Power Resource Center and GDEcD offices in Atlanta
 - * Had lunch with the Commissioner & Site location manager from the Film Division.
 - * Meet Commissioner Ken Stewart, Tourism Deputy Commissioner Kevin Langston, Stefanie Paupauk, Communications & PR division, Region 1 rep Brooks Mathis, and Georgia Power Economic Developer Chuck Scragg
- **Dalton State College– Business to Student Bags**
 - * Working with DSC to provide welcome back bags to all students to promote local businesses
- **Inquiries/Prospects-**
 - * Met with Colleen Simon of Radiotherapy Centers of Georgia regarding an oncology center for Gilmer County. The denial of a CON is being appealed. Awaiting hearing date.
 - * Worked a small manufacturing prospect looking for 5K sq/ft with Georgia Power. Business owner decided to “stay put and see how things turn around.”
 - * Unidentified prospect came in. Could not meet “must haves” regarding property size, water & sewer
 - * State project manager had a client looking at Cohutta Water Plant. Called to request local incentives package. Client (before receiving incentives package) decided to stay in Metro Atlanta area.
 - * Couple interested in chain restaurant in East Ellijay. Awaiting approval on franchise.
 - * John Christian– interested in “north Georgia area” for community theater and arts center. Currently has 2 theaters in Marietta. He was initially looking at several counties but eventually narrowed to Gilmer. Looked at several alternative locations. Effective June 25, 2010, signed lease on downtown building for Apple Mountain Arts Center to open Q4 2010. (See attached press release)
 - * 5 other “soft” inquiries regarding sq/ft availability and market analysis

New Performing Art Center is opening this November

John Christian's

Apple Mountain Art Center

Located In Historic Downtown Ellijay, Ga.

The Apple Mountain Art Center,[not for profit] will be opening in late November and will be providing a host of events and activities for all ages. We will be located at 12 north side square right on the square. We will have a 180 seat Auditorium, Art Gallery, Portrait Studio, Dance Studio, Art Studio, Music and Voice Studios. We will have a full service old fashion Ice Cream Parlor and Coffee Bar equipped with Wi-Fi and inside and outside seating. In the back we have a great antique shop before and after the show. We will be home to:

- The Apple Mountain Playhouse, producing 8 to 10 productions annually.
- Storyboard Theater, will be our children's theater program that will produce 10 to 12 productions annually and will provide programs at the playhouse and at local schools.
- Apple Mac, is our coffee house nights on Thursday, and Friday nights with live music for our teens and young adults.

If you would like to help with Apple Mac, start with getting on our email list or call us. We will be starting a support team of art goers and artisans to help with the planning, marketing, and building of the Theater. You can contact us at www.applemountainartcenter@yahoo.com our web page is not up yet but you can get info at our Marietta, Blackwell Playhouse location at www.blackwellplayhouse.com we will have updates on line ASAP. You can call Apple Mac at 706 276-1300. Thanks John Christian, Artistic Director.

Our first productions at the Playhouse

- *A Christmas Carol*
- *Annie Jr.*
- *To Kill A Mockingbird*
- *Charlotte's Web*



**Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce
Public Relations Update March 30, 2010**

- Our “The Ellijays” Facebook page now has 304 active users, with 72 percent of the group females, and 28 percent males. 35-44 years old represents the largest active age bracket of users at 31 percent. The page receives four out of five stars regarding its post ratings.
- Our “Explore the Ellijays – North Georgia” discussion board on www.mtbr.com, one of the world’s leading online sources for mountain biking enthusiasts, has received approximately 1,100 page views.
- Our “Explore the Ellijays” discussion board on www.dirtragemag.com, one of the nation’s leading publications for mountain biking enthusiasts, has approximately 400 page views.
- Recent threads posted on www.bicycling.com, hosted by Rodale Publishing Group (Bicycling, Mountain Bike, Men’s Health and Women’s Health magazines) have received approximately 150 page views.
- The search term “Ellijay” is averaging more than 100 mentions per week, while our twitter feed at “exploretheellijays” now has 37 followers.
- Hosted four staff members from Dirt Rag Mountain Bike Magazine, one of the nation’s premier publications for mountain biking enthusiasts. Activities included:
 - Accommodations at Mulberry Gap
 - Meet & Greet/Agenda Review with Staff
 - Guided Trail Rides
 - Accommodations at Sliding Rock Cabins
 - Tour of Downtown Ellijay
 - Ellijay Mountain Biking Association Volunteer Trail Maintenance Session
 - Introduction/Meeting with Mayor Hoyle
 - Reception Hosted by the Chamber of Commerce
 - Media Gift Bag Compliments of the Chamber of Commerce

- A great article about the Dirt Rag Mountain Bike Magazine site visit can be found at <http://www.dirtragemag.com/blogarific/north-georgia-spring-break-away/>. An article about the visit will be published in the May issue of Dirt Rag. The magazine is published six times annually, with a circulation of approximately 32,000. The magazine is distributed via subscriptions, newsstands and more than 2,000 bicycle shops worldwide.
- Through our social media efforts, we have posted more than 75 local photos to photo/video sharing site such as www.photobucket.com and www.flickr.com, in addition to posting images via our Facebook page.
- Wrote and distributed press release – *North Georgia's Gilmer County a Generational Destination*. Release was distributed to more than 500 regional media outlets in Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee. www.menstraveler.com
- Drafted press release – *Carters Lake Offers a Unique Georgia Travel Getaway, Undeveloped Shoreline a Step Back in Time*. Release currently waiting approval. Release scheduled for Georgia news wire distribution.
- Currently in the process of scheduling our second on-site travel writer visit with Deborah Storey, travel editor of the Huntsville Times and writer for www.al.com. Emphasis of visit to be placed on “girl’s getaway,” including food, shopping, arts and crafts, etc.
- Currently in the process of scheduling our third on-site travel writer visit with Patty George, travel writer for www.al.com, including the Mobile Press-Register, Montgomery Advertiser and Birmingham News. Emphasis to be placed on Apple Alley and the Georgia Apple Festival.
- Submitted media request seeking information regarding “pet-friendly” businesses. Provided writer contact information for Jerri Nowlen at Sliding Rock Cabins.
- Submitted media request for a travel publication seeking information about family fitness travel ideas and destinations.
- Submitted media request from Macaroni Kids Family Travel, as the writer was seeking ideas for moms traveling without kids.

- Submitted media request from a Los Angeles-based freelance writer seeking information about how to get beginners involved in hiking and backpacking.
- Submitted media request from MSNBC, seeking information about cabin rentals and traveling with large groups.
- Submitted media request from a national parenting magazine, seeking information about moms who hate to camp, but do it anyway.
- Submitted media request from a lifestyle and fitness blogger, seeking information about inexpensive ways to get in shape.
- Submitted media request from Examiner.com (Atlanta), regarding Spring Break travel destinations.

Upcoming Activities

- Continue scheduling writer visits.
- Distribution of press release about Carters Lake.
- Write/distribute press release about local small businesses encouraging individuals to pursue new hobbies – guided camping, kayaking, mountain biking and hiking trips, instructional arts and crafts activities, etc.
- Write/distribute/pitch information about Gilmer County's new kayaking/canoeing trail.
- Continue pushing information about the area, happenings, business specials, etc. via social networking channels.
- Produce 1,000 refrigerator magnets for placement in local hotels and cabin rentals, encouraging visitors to join our Facebook fan page and share their travel stories, memories, recommendations, tips, photos and videos.
- Prepare Gilmer County fact sheet/story ideas for distribution during the Georgia Travel Media Marketplace 2010.
- Prepare for participation in the 2010 International Mountain Biking Association's (IMBA) Summit in Augusta, Georgia.



**Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce
Public Relations Update May 4, 2010**

- Our “The Ellijays” Facebook page now has 373 active users, with 69 percent of the group females, and 30 percent males. 35-44 years old represents the largest active age bracket of users at 31 percent.
- Our “Explore the Ellijays – North Georgia” discussion board on www.mtbr.com, one of the world’s leading online sources for mountain biking enthusiasts, has received approximately 1,600 page views.
- Our “Explore the Ellijays” discussion board on www.dirtragemag.com, one of the nation’s leading publications for mountain biking enthusiasts, has approximately 603 page views.
- Recent threads posted on www.bicycling.com, hosted by Rodale Publishing Group (Bicycling, Mountain Bike, Men’s Health and Women’s Health magazines) have received approximately 850 page views, including active discussions about both road and mountain biking.
- The search term “Ellijay” is averaging more than 100 mentions per week, while our twitter feed at “exploretheellijays” now has 37 followers.
- Feature article about mountain biking in Gilmer County was published in the May issue of Dirt Rag Mountain Bike Magazine – currently on newsstands.
- Through our social media efforts, we have posted more than 100 local photos to photo/video sharing site such as www.photobucket.com and www.flickr.com, in addition to posting images via our Facebook page.
- Wrote and distributed press release – *Carters Lake Offers a Unique Georgia Travel Getaway – Undeveloped Shoreline a Step Back in Time*. Release was distributed via news wire to media outlets throughout the State of Georgia, as well as media via internal media databases including media in Chattanooga, Florida, Alabama, travel/tourism and outdoors/fishing.

- Currently in the process of drafting a press release about guided tours from Gilmer County-based businesses and organizations.
- Scheduled on-site media visit from Robert Stephens, editor of Boating Life/Boating Magazines for June 9-11. Site visit will include a full-page article about boating and water sports opportunities on Carters Lake.
- In the process of scheduling our second on-site travel writer visit with Deborah Storey, travel editor of the Huntsville Times and writer for www.al.com. Emphasis of visit to be placed on “girl’s getaway,” including food, shopping, arts and crafts, etc.
- Currently in the process of scheduling our third on-site travel writer visit with Patty George, travel writer for www.al.com, including the Mobile Press-Register, Montgomery Advertiser and Birmingham News. Emphasis to be placed on Apple Alley and the Georgia Apple Festival.
- Currently in the process of scheduling a combined on-site travel writer visit with freelance writer Doc Lawrence (Y’ALL Magazine, The Piedmont Review, Charleston Review, The Atlanta Gazette, Cumming Home, The Cherokee Connection, Retire In Georgia, Dawson Times), Robert Nebel of Men’s Traveler and Jimmy Jacobs of Georgia Sportsman.
- Facilitated freelance article/photography support of an article about The Martyn House for Southern Living Magazine. Article will appear in an upcoming issue.
- Wrote and designed a two-page fact sheet about Gilmer County for the Travel Media Marketplace 2010, distributed to approximately 100 travel writers.
- Submitted information about Gilmer County to Cari Clarke of Nubia Magazine regarding budget friendly travel destinations.
- Currently working with freelance writer Chip Brantley, assigned to Southern Living and Cooking Light, on an article about Gilmer County’s Apple Alley.
- Attending the International Mountain Biking Association’s (IMBA) 2010 Summit.
- Submitted artwork for refrigerator magnets distributed through rental agencies. Message to encourage visitors to join our Facebook fan page and share their travel stories, memories, recommendations, tips, photos and videos.



**Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce
Public Relations Update June 3, 2010**

- Our “The Ellijays” Facebook page now has 407 active users, with 69 percent of the group females, and 30 percent males. 35-44 years old represents the largest active age bracket of users at 31 percent. The page’s post quality ranks at 7.9, or four out of five stars.
- Our “Explore the Ellijays – North Georgia” discussion board on www.mtbr.com, one of the world’s leading online sources for mountain biking enthusiasts, has received approximately 1,825 page views.
- Our “Explore the Ellijays” discussion board on www.dirtragemag.com, one of the nation’s leading publications for mountain biking enthusiasts, has approximately 750 page views.
- Recent threads posted on www.bicycling.com, hosted by Rodale Publishing Group (Bicycling, Mountain Bike, Men’s Health and Women’s Health magazines) have received approximately 1050 page views, including active discussions about both road and mountain biking.
- The search term “Ellijay” is averaging more than 80 mentions per week.
- Through our social media efforts, we have posted more than 120 local photos to photo/video sharing site such as www.photobucket.com and www.flickr.com, in addition to posting images via our Facebook page.
- Currently in the process of drafting a press release about guided tours from Gilmer County-based businesses and organizations.
- Finalizing schedule and on-site visit for Robert Stephens, editor of Boating, Boating Life and www.newboats.com for a full page article about Gilmer County’s Carters Lake in the January 2011 issues. Site visit will include meetings with Carters Lake officials, a tour of the lake and surrounding area.

- Continue pitching on-site visit for Deborah Storey, travel editor of the Huntsville Times and writer for www.al.com.
- Continue pitching on-site visit with Patty George, travel writer for www.al.com, including the Mobile Press-Register, Montgomery Advertiser and Birmingham News.
- Currently in the process of scheduling a combined on-site travel writer visit with freelance writer Doc Lawrence (Y'ALL Magazine, The Piedmont Review, Charleston Review, The Atlanta Gazette, Cumming Home, The Cherokee Connection, Retire In Georgia, Dawson Times), Robert Nebel of Men's Traveler and Jimmy Jacobs of Georgia Sportsman.
- Facilitated freelance article/photography support of an article about The Martyn House for Southern Living Magazine. Article will appear in an upcoming issue.
- Finalizing on-site visit with freelance writer Chip Brantley, assigned to Southern Living and Cooking Light, on an article about Gilmer County's Apple Alley. Arranging meetings for Mr. Brantley with Hillcrest Orchards and R&A Orchards. Supplied background information and photography to support editorial efforts.
- Sent Gilmer County pitch to Kara Birkenstock of Lifestyle Talk Radio Network – seeking story ideas about summer weekend and last minute affordable travel packages.
- Sent Gilmer County pitch to freelance writer Michelle Slaughter who is seeking story angles about eco-beautiful weddings.
- Sent Gilmer County pitch to freelance writer Jennifer Forbes who is seeking story angles about eco summer excursions for Eco News Network.
- Sent Gilmer County pitch to Marla Smith of the Atlanta Examiner who is seeking story angles about Father's Day ideas.
- Sent Gilmer County pitch to Helena Oliviero of the Atlanta Journal Constitution who is seeking story angles about camping in the current economy.
- Sent Gilmer County pitch to Paul Eisenberg of FOX News.com who is seeking story angles about camping for beginners.
- Sent Gilmer County pitch to Joyce Shulman of Macaroni Family Travel who is seeking story angles about camp-style vacations for families.

- Attended the 2010 IMBA (International Mountain Bicycling Association) World Summit in Augusta. Attendees included Mike Palmeri, Terry Palmeri, Ginni Taylor and Andrew Gates.
 - Set-up exhibit booth and distributed met several hundred Summit attendees, distributed Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce brochures/literature, distributed local trail maps, handed-out apple cider and apple donuts, etc.
 - Facilitated lunch meeting with IMBA President, Mike Van Abel and SRAM, VP of Product and Marketing, Mike Mecuri (one of the key note speakers). SRAM is a mountain bike component manufacturer (\$480 million in sales). We extended an invitation for both to come for a visit, and apparently Mike Mecuri plans to take us up on the invitation, and will help to promote Gilmer County through the company's social networking efforts, retail newsletter, etc.
 - Facilitated a conversation with Hans Rey, a multiple-time world champion and mountain bike pioneer (key note speaker). We extended an invitation for him to make a visit to Gilmer County.
 - The group attended several sessions, including Beating the Cash Bonk - Funding Your Trail Projects, Environmental Impacts of Mountain Biking, Youth Cycling Programs, Club Care - Avoiding Common Pitfalls Facing Volunteer Groups, Connecting with the Bike Media, Building Partnerships to get Things Done, Working Effectively with the Bike Industry and Overcoming Roadblocks to Trail Projects.
 - Met with John Bradley of Outside Magazine. Pitched Gilmer County as one of the publication's top mountain biking destinations.
 - Met with Lou Mazzante, editor of Mountain Bike Magazine.
 - Met with Jeff Barber, editor of SingleTracks, a leading mountain biking publication located in Atlanta. We extended an invitation for him to visit Gilmer County for some guided trail rides.
 - Met with Chris Bernhardt (Director of Consulting Services for IMBA) and Tom Sauret (SORBA) regarding a potential Ride Center in GC.
 - Met with Mark Eller, Communications Director for IMBA, and will include him on all of our press outreach to the MB industry.
 - Met with Maurice Tierney, Publisher of Dirt Rag, and thanked him for letting the crew come down for a visit.