

 **VISIT**
LAKE NORMAN
visitlakenorman.org



We **matter**

• work • play • dine • stay •



Visit Lake Norman Board Members



Visit Lake Norman Staff

Fiscal Year 2009
Annual Report

We are connected

As a local business owner, I am proud to serve as Chairman for Visit Lake Norman. Some may wonder why tourism is important to the business sector, especially to someone who does not own a hotel, restaurant or attraction. There are many elements that work harmoniously in a financial system to ensure a successful economy. Tourism is one of the key ingredients in achieving such great economic success, and Visit Lake Norman continues to raise the bar.



Randy Marion,
Chairman

In the past year, Visit Lake Norman generated over \$7.5 million to Cornelius, Davidson, and Huntersville by attracting events that produce large numbers of overnight visitation. Why does this matter to you and me? The \$7.5 million in visitor spending saved taxpayers in our three towns \$461 per household and provided retailers, hotels, attractions, restaurants, and gas stations with revenue streams that would not have existed otherwise.

How are these events secured? Visit Lake Norman serves to market the resources of our towns to various national and regional audiences, such as sports, group, and event planners, leisure travelers, motorcoach operators, and media. Extensive research is done to find events that are both a good fit to our area and bring the biggest bang for the buck. Tedious planning and strategic marketing efforts ensure the events will be successful and lucrative.

As for the resources, all three towns have a wealth of unique attractions, excellent sports facilities, and traditional assets. Visit Lake Norman works together with Cornelius, Davidson, and Huntersville to maintain the integrity of each town's chosen ideals while providing the appropriate collateral exposure to suitable markets. Visit Lake Norman consistently strives to find the right connections with the right people, and in the end, the reward is revenue.

I know that is why I have chosen to be part of such an integral piece of our economy. Visit Lake Norman is connected to us all.

Randy Marion, Chairman
Visit Lake Norman Board of Directors

Visit Lake Norman Board Members FY 2009

Randy Marion

Chairman
Member at Large
Randy Marion Chevrolet/Geo/
Pontiac/Buick

Woody Washam

Vice Chairman
Member at Large
Community One Bank, N.A.

Joe Harwood

Community Affairs
Member at Large
Huntersville Attraction
Representative
Duke Energy Carolina

Barbara McCall

Treasurer
Member at Large
Ladd, McCall & Associates

Cathy Bentz

Assistant Treasurer
Member at Large
Bentz & Associates, P.A.

Susan Medlin

Town of Cornelius Representative

John Woods

Town of Davidson Representative

Brian Sisson

Town of Huntersville Representative

Jeanna Hoffman

Cornelius Hotel Representative
Hampton Inn

Boris Bunich

Davidson Hotel Representative
Homewood Suites

Vinay Patel

Huntersville Hotel Representative
Courtyard & Residence Inn

Chris "Sid" Sadlowski

Cornelius Attraction Representative
Raceworld, USA

Cissi Lyles

Davidson Attraction Representative
Davidson Guest House

John Kurti

Member at Large
K-Squared, Inc.

Tim Newman

Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority

Bill Russell

President
Lake Norman Chamber

Excellence in Leadership

visitlakenorman.org • 704.987.3300



Visit Lake Norman Leaders

We produce dollars

FY 2009 Highlights:

- Total Economic Impact of Events Brought by Visit Lake Norman:

\$7,555,950

to local hotels, attractions, restaurants, businesses, retailers, gas stations, and towns.

52% increase over FY 2008



Walmart FLW National Guard Open



Motorcoach Tours

- Hotel Room Nights Generated by Visit Lake Norman Events

10,344

44% increase over FY 2008



Sports Events

Return On Investment:

\$14.92 was generated back to the local economy through our events for every dollar Visit Lake Norman was funded.

- **Visit Lake Norman brought in and assisted with events which infused our local economy with more than \$45 million, generating millions in local and state tax revenues.**



Familiarity Tours

We are part of something bigger

- Domestic visitors to and within North Carolina spent a record \$16.9 billion in 2008
- The travel and tourism industry directly employs more than 190,500 North Carolinians
- Tourism in North Carolina generated over \$1.3 billion in state and local tax revenues
- North Carolina is the sixth most visited state in the U.S.



“As we begin working to revitalize our economy, tourism is one of the state’s most vital industries, and increasing the number of visitors will boost our economy and help thousands of business owners, many of whom are small, independent, locally based entrepreneurs.”

NC Governor Beverly Perdue

We achieve

Awards and Accolades



*Sally Ashworth,
Executive Director*

- Sally Ashworth, Executive Director of Visit Lake Norman was recently named 2009-2010 President of the Destination Management Association of North Carolina (DMANC).
- Visit Lake Norman awarded 2009 Platinum Award by DMANC for the Walmart FLW National Guard Open "Kickin' Bass" Campaign.
- Visit Lake Norman awarded 2009 Innovation Awards by DMANC for Lunch & Learn Series and Information Road Show.

Pictured Left to Right:

Connie Wilson
Legislative Lobbyist
NC Tourism Industry
Association

Lynn Minges
Assistant Secretary for
Tourism Marketing and
Global Branding
North Carolina
Department of
Commerce

Sally Ashworth
Executive Director
Visit Lake Norman



We are your resource

Visitor Center

The Visit Lake Norman Visitor Center is bright, friendly and full of information. Our Visitor Center staff, comprised mainly of ambassadors, work diligently to stay on top of the latest and greatest in Lake Norman, making them your best resource for where to tour, play, dine, and stay.

"This is the best, most comfortable Visitor Center that I have ever visited. You have plentiful resources and a very friendly staff!" ~ *Dale Swenson, Relcoation from California*

"This is an excellent Visitors Center with a wealth of information! The staff was very friendly and helpful."

~ *Suzanne Jaquette, Visitor from Pennsylvania*



Ambassadors Teri & Wally Friedlaender

"I do LOVE your Visitor Center. It is so bright and warm. Overall the Center is an exceptional place for visitors to gather information on the area."

~ *Ed Phillips, Publisher of NC Outdoor Recreation Guide & Chairman for Burke County Tourism Authority*



Ambassador Marcia Liedle

In FY 2009 the Visit Lake Norman Visitor Center Staff:

- Helped over 6,100 walk-in visitors from 50 States and 11 Countries
- Assisted with 42,000 inquires

We capture crowds

Marketing and Advertising

- **13.9 Million** people reached through advertising
- Streamlined advertising efforts into integrated marketing which combines **print, television, and online** advertising
- Over **17** targeted publications
- **167%** increase of collateral pieces distributed
- **37%** increase in monthly calendar distribution numbers
- Produced/published **12** area collateral pieces
- **17** events with traveling road shows/information booths
- **12** international, national, and online travel articles
- **8** featured media events, familiarity (FAM) tours, motorcoach stops
- **20** travel writers hosted, generating thousands of dollars in editorial coverage



Courtney Wolfrom & Travis Dancy
Tourism Day - Raleigh



Intern Candler Reed - Loch Norman Highland Games



Collateral Pieces/Ads

We conquer the web

Website

visitlakenorman.org

- **77%** increased total hits - Over 1.1 Million Hits for year
- **52%** increased unique user sessions - Average of **35,000** individuals logging on per month, **419,860** people for year
- **48%** increased number pages viewed
- Banner advertisement partnerships featured
- Increased website search engine standings
- Expanded website with new descriptive features and links, photo galleries, downloads, calendars, and media page

419,860
People
would
fill the
Panthers
Stadium
5
Times!



Bank of America Stadium

We



Cornelius

Cruisin' Cornelius Hometown Tour

We cruised Cornelius and discovered all the charisma this cool town has to offer! Creative arts, calm lake waters, cool nightlife, collectible antiques, and of course the motorsports craze make Cornelius a captivating destination. The tour was designed to provide hospitality partners and media the means to conduct travelers through Cornelius and bring visitors to Lake Norman again and again.

Raceworld USA Fan Appreciation

Visit Lake Norman reved up its exposure throughout race week. Visit Lake Norman participated in Raceworld USA Fan Appreciation Day and Joe Gibbs Racing's Fan Fest by setting up a booth with information regarding the Towns of Cornelius, Davidson, and Huntersville. Prizes and giveaways of Lake Norman paraphenelia was also given away.



Raceworld USA Fan Day

Secured Events for FY2009

- NSA World Series (July)
- National Bass Circuit TOUR Championship (July)
- FLW Bass Fishing League (September)
- American Bass Anglers Bassmaster Weekend Series National Championship (November)
- Walmart FLW National Guard Open Fishing Tournament (April)
- North Carolina State Games (June)

Secured Events for Upcoming FY2010

- FLW Bass Fishing League Super Tournament (September)
- The Bass Federation State Championship (October)
- FLW Bass Fishing League Regional Championship (October)
- National Bass Circuit Pro Series Fishing National Championship (Nov.)
- VisitLakeNorman.org Showcase Soccer Tournament (February)
- Walmart FLW National Guard Open Fishing Tournament (March)

We



Davidson

Divine Davidson Hometown Tour

A packed adventure that showcased the town that was featured on UNC-TV's Tarheel Towns in January. Davidson has grown by leaps and bounds while maintaining that unique charm that makes Davidson, well, FAMOUS! Experienced arts, history, and elegance in a divine friendly package.

Downtown Davidson Hip & Historic Bags

A Collaborative "green" effort with Downtown Davidson Inc. Merchant Committee provided participating Davidson retailers with merchandise bags for local coupon campaign.

Chocolate Fish - Davidson Chocolate Co.

Partnered with Davidson's merchant whom created unique chocolate bass fish as giveaways for events, trade shows, and fishing tournaments.



Davidson Chocolate Co.

April is for Arts

Each town featured a month long celebration featuring more than 40 cultural and arts based events, exhibits, and festivals. Provided marketing support including: served on committee, created banner advertisement, distributed collateral and information to local hotels, produced a map and event sheet, participated in some of the events.

Secured Events for FY2009

- PONY Bronco Baseball Regional Championship (July)
- Cowbell Challenge (June)

Hotelier Connection Program - Connected Gordon Clark, Davidson Village Inn, with University of South Carolina student intern Kelsey Dunn.

Secured Events for Upcoming FY2010

- PONY Baseball Zone Championship (July)
- VisitLakeNorman.org Soccer Classic Tournament (August)
- Lake Norman Fall Classic Soccer Tournament (November)
- VisitLakeNorman.org Showcase Soccer Tournament (February)
- Southern Conference Wrestling Tournament (March)
- Cowbell Challenge (June)

We



Huntersville

Hooked on Huntersville Hometown Tour

It's why our visitors get Hooked on Huntersville! Visited Blythe Landing for lunch by Armin's Sunshine Café, Rural Hill, Latta Nature Preserve/Historic Latta Plantation, Carolina Raptor Center, Joe Gibbs Racing, Bradford Store, and Birkdale Village.

Other Events and Partnerships

Fall into Huntersville

Rural Hill Scottish Festival and Loch Norman

Highland Games

Carolina Renaissance Festival

Carolina Raptor Center

Discovery Place Kids Blast Off

North Meck Soccer Club



Carolina Raptor Center

Secured Events for FY2009

- National Bass Circuit TOUR Championship (July)
- National Softball Association World Series (July)
- FLW Bass Fishing League (September)
- Ramblin' Rose Triathlon (October)
- American Bass Anglers Bassmaster Weekend Series National Championship (November)
- Walmart FLW National Guard Open Fishing Tournament (April)
- Early Times "Reel in a Million" Fishing Tournament (June)
- North Carolina State Games (June)

Secured Events for Upcoming FY2010

- Pan American Junior Synchronized Swimming Championships (August)
- VisitLakeNorman.org Soccer Classic Tournament (August)
- FLW Bass Fishing League Super Tournament (September)
- The Bass Federation State Championship (October)
- FLW Bass Fishing League Regional Championship (October)
- National Bass Circuit Pro Series Fishing National Championship (Nov.)
- Lake Norman Fall Classic Soccer Tournament (November)
- VisitLakeNorman.org Showcase Soccer Tournament (February)
- Walmart FLW National Guard Open Fishing Tournament (March)

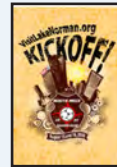
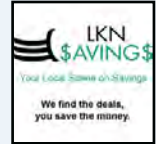
We partner

Community Partners

Visit Lake Norman depends on the great relationships with local and regional partners to help us accomplish great things. In order to bring critical tournaments and events to the Lake Norman area, which continue to have a positive economic impact on our community, Visit Lake Norman depends on these relationships.

We achieved some new amazing partnerships in FY2009 with the following organizations:

- North Meck Soccer Club
- Davidson College Athletics
- LKN Fun
- LKN Savings



We continued to grow our regional partnership in FY2009 with: National Association of Sports Commissions, Destination Management Association of North Carolina Travel Industry Association, Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce, Charlotte Regional Sports Commission, Charlotte Regional Visitor Authority, Visit Charlotte, Cabarrus County CVB, Mooresville CVB, Statesville CVB, North Mecklenburg Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, and American Bus Association.

Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce - Leadership Class Hospitality and Tourism Day

Visit Lake Norman annually hosts the Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce Leadership Class educating community leaders on tourism-related and meeting-related activities in our towns. Tours feature the economic impact of tourism to the community and the vital role that Visit Lake Norman plays in bringing tourism dollars and tax revenue into the Lake Norman community. Many positive business relationships develop from this outreach, strengthening our community connections with local government, financial institutions, banking, non-profit organizations, and hospitality partners.



Leadership Class at the Bradford Store

Who *We* are:

Staff:

Sally Ashworth

Executive Director
ashworth@lakenorman.org
704-987-3300 x 210

Amber MacIntyre

Office Manager
macintyre@lakenorman.org
704-987-3300 x 213

Travis Dancy

Sports Marketing Manager
tdancy@lakenorman.org
704-987-3300 x 206

Courtney Wolfrom

Marketing Manager
wolfrom@lakenorman.org
704-987-3300 x 209

Cyndi Cearbaugh

Visitor Center Assistant
cearbaugh@lakenorman.org
704-987-3300 x 208



Staff (L-R) - Amber MacIntyre, Courtney Wolfrom,
Sally Ashworth, Cyndi Cearbaugh, Travis Dancy

FY 2009 Ambassadors:

Midge Barna
Kathy Bowman
Charmaine d'Entremont
Carolyn Fiddy
Teri Friedlaender
Wally Friedlaender
Linda Gore
Kim Green
David Howard
Donna Howell



Ambassadors (L-R) - Kathy Ross, John McKay, Charmaine d'Entremont, Jean Misiukiewicz, Kathy Bowman, Carolyn Fiddy



Lori Kasprzak
Kay Klein
Marcia Liedle
John McKay
Charlotte Miller
Jean Misiukiewicz
Kathy Ross
Sue Winter-Hallman



Ambassadors, Board Members, and Staff

- Volunteers (Ambassadors) Contributed 2,346 Hours = \$47,506.50 cost savings*
- Interns Contributed 989.31 Hours = \$20,033.53 cost savings*

*Figures based on the Independent Sector Study: Value of Volunteer Time

Thank You!



Interns and Staff take on the US Whitewater Challenge
Photo Courtesy of US Whitewater Center

FY 2009 Interns:

Will Dannelly
Chelsea Davis
Kelsey George
Matt Herr
Lauren McIntyre
Candler Reed



Intern Kelsey George

We **welcome you**

Cornelius Davidson Huntersville



Visitor Center Flag Pole Dedication

Visit Lake Norman
19900 West Catawba Avenue
Cornelius, North Carolina 28031

visitlakenorman.org • 704.987.3300