



**GreaterRome**  
convention & visitors bureau

**2013 Annual Report**  
**2014 Outlook**

# Economic Impact

## 2012 Economic Impact of Tourism

**2012 total impact of travel & tourism in Rome & Floyd County:  
\$125,090,000**

Estimates include travel expenditures, travel-generated employment and payroll income, as well as tax revenues for state and local government. In Floyd County, the tourism industry supported a payroll of \$22.8 million and supported 1,190 jobs throughout the service and hospitality industries. Travelers to Rome & Floyd County generated \$4.4 million in state tax revenue and \$3.6 million in local tax revenue. Estimates are according to a study by the US Travel Association.

### Trends

	Tourism Expenditures	Local Tax Generated	Tourism Jobs Supported
2003	\$90,360,000	\$2,700,000	1,190
2004	\$92,720,000	\$2,790,000	1,160
2005	\$100,690,000	\$3,000,000	1,210
2006	\$109,180,000	\$3,240,000	1,250
2007	\$112,200,000	\$3,280,000	1,250
2008	\$113,920,000	\$3,380,000	1,230
2009	\$107,560,000	\$3,280,000	1,210
2010	\$110,120,000	\$3,270,000	1,150
2011	\$117,220,000	\$3,380,000	1,160
2012	\$125,090,000	\$3,630,000	1,190

**38.4% increase**      % Change from 2003 to 2012      **34.4% increase**      (Same as 2003 figure)

\*\*2013 estimates will be available from the US Travel Association in Fall 2014.

## 2013 Economic Impact of Sports, Groups & Events

These numbers represent only events, conventions, meetings and other activities where the GRCVB was directly involved in planning, coordination, or assistance.

Total GRCVB Impact:	\$10,434,963	Market Mix of Sports, Groups & Events	
Events:	\$4,776,669	Events:	45.79%
Sports Events:	\$4,516,826	Sports Events:	43.28%
Meetings & Conventions:	\$621,203	Meetings & Conventions:	5.95%
Weddings:	\$271,392	Weddings:	2.60%
Reunions:	\$163,975	Reunions:	1.57%
Films:	\$61,485	Films:	0.59%
Group Travel (Overnight):	\$12,444	Group Travel (Overnight):	0.12%
Group Travel (Day):	\$10,969	Group Travel (Day):	0.10%

**Local Tax Generated on Sports, Groups and Events:** \$242,937

**People serviced:** 121,022

**State Tax Generated on Sports, Groups and Events:** \$417,399

**Groups:** 146

## Major Sports, Groups & Events in 2013

Event	Date	Estimated Impact
Wings Over North Georgia Air Show	October	\$2,515,092
NAIA Football National Championship	December	\$1,180,261
Global Image Sports/Wolves Soccer Invit. Camp	July	\$263,700
USTA Georgia Adult League Championship	May	\$246,924
Georgia Challenger Tennis Tournament	June	\$245,563
Southern Closed Doubles Championships	August	\$202,455
Southern 16 Tennis Tournament	June	\$178,910
USTA Boys & Girls 12-14 Regional Tournament	July	\$151,201
USA Gymnastics Level 2-6 State Championships	May	\$134,400
Cave Spring Motorcycle Rally	July	\$132,168
Global Image Sports/West Ham Soccer Invit. Camp	August	\$120,900
Taste of Home Cooking School	September	\$110,000
Rome International Film Festival	September	\$101,650

\*\*This is not a complete listing of all events assisted or planned by the GRCVB - this includes only events that the GRCVB actively worked with and which generated at least \$100,000 of economic impact or more.

# Marketing & Public Relations Advertising

**International Travel Market - Print**  
Selling Long Haul (UK/Ireland)

**Leisure Travel Market - Internet**  
Facebook Advertising

**Leisure Travel Market - Print**  
Discover Georgia Outdoors  
Georgia Travel Guide  
Historic High Country Travel Assoc.  
Rome News-Tribune  
Southern Living

**Leisure Travel Market - Radio**  
WLAQ

**Leisure Travel Market - Television**  
Navigate Media/WXIA-11 Alive (Atlanta)

**Small Meetings/Conventions Market - Print**  
ConventionSouth

**Sports Events - Internet**  
ESPN3- NAIA Football  
National Championship

**Sports Events Market - Print**  
NAIA Football National Championship  
NCCAA Victory Bowl  
SportsEvents Magazine

[www.RomeGeorgia.org](http://www.RomeGeorgia.org)

Metrics	
2013 Visitation	62,412
2012 Visitation	50,867
2011 Visitation	44,343
2010 Visitation	44,204

Percentage Changes: 2012-2013	
Visitation:	23% Increase
Page per visit:	37.6% Increase
Average Time:	21.2% Increase
Bounce Rate:	8.3% Decrease



## Myrtle Hill Cemetery Mobile App Tour



In May 2013, the GRCVB and Myrtle Hill/Oak Hill Memorial Association officially released the Myrtle Hill Cemetery Mobile App tour, a free GPS-enabled app for iPhone, iPad and Android devices. The audio-visual tour features over 40 different sites, bringing the historic attraction to life. Visitors are introduced to the app tour with an opening video featuring a special welcome from cemetery historian Anne Culpepper. The stories of Rome's pioneers and heroes are told through voiceover narration, text and an extensive photograph collection. The mobile app was developed by Populace, Inc. and is available for free at [www.MyrtleHill.mobi](http://www.MyrtleHill.mobi).



**Total Downloads: 1,189**  
(March-December 2013)

## Social Media

-  [facebook.com/RomeGeorgia](http://facebook.com/RomeGeorgia)
-  [twitter.com/RomeGeorgia](http://twitter.com/RomeGeorgia)
-  [instagram.com/RomeGeorgia](http://instagram.com/RomeGeorgia)
-  [pinterest.com/RomeGeorgia](http://pinterest.com/RomeGeorgia)
-  [youtube.com/RomeGeorgia1834](http://youtube.com/RomeGeorgia1834)
-  [www.RomeGeorgia.mobi](http://www.RomeGeorgia.mobi)

### Facebook Metrics

<i>Georgia's Rome</i>	<i>Last Stop Gift Shop</i>
2013 Total Likes: <b>13,110</b>	2013 Total Likes: <b>575</b>
2012 Total Likes: 11,471	2012 Total Likes: 395
Social Reach: 2,042,055	Social Reach: 170,538
<b>Users outside county: 64%</b>	



Scan to download the Georgia's Rome Visitor Guide Mobile App on Android or iPhone



# Top Achievements

## Greater Rome Convention & Visitors Bureau

### Marketing & Public Relations

- Published 47 Press Releases
- Hosted 10 travel writers with various print, electronic, radio and television mediums
- Utilized \$15,000 in awarded grant money from Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) to fund two "Let's Go!" travel segments featuring Greater Rome and Historic High Country for 11Alive
- Entered into United Kingdom/Ireland markets through *Authentic America* campaign with print advertising and launch of **RomeGeorgia.org.UK**
- Recognized the customer service of five nominated individuals with *Superstars of Service* award program
- Expanded social media reach into Instagram and use of #RomeGeorgia branding on all platforms
- Planned and hosted Winter Chautauqua regional tourism conference at Berry College

### Civil War 150th Anniversary Marketing

- Hosted four lectures as a part of the ongoing Civil War Symposium series
- Partnered with Civil War Heritage Trails to create signage commemorating contributions of Noble Brothers Foundry and hosted unveiling ceremony

### Rome Sports Commission

- Continued partnership and marketing collaborative with Georgia Sports and National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC)
- Rome Sports Commission nominated for *SportsEvents Magazine* Reader's Choice Award

### Film & Television

- Worked with film crews at Myrtle Hill Cemetery and in the Vanns Valley area on the set of Dreamworks' *Need for Speed* (release date: March 14, 2014)
- Assisted over 25 film scouts representing major motion pictures and independent films

### Product Development

- Myrtle Hill Cemetery Mobile App created as free interactive tour of Rome's historic cemetery
- Boswell Cabin developed as outdoor visitor center and trailhead for Jackson Hill Trail System
- *Sulzbacher Roman Holiday* excursion boat completed 43 cruises comprising over 258 captain/crew hours and 3,237 total people served, increasing visibility and use as an option for group tour itineraries
- SPLOST passed in Rome-Floyd County, providing funding for the Tennis Center of Georgia, a Downtown Visitor Center, and Jackson Hill waterworks event venue
- Worked with City of Rome Public Works and GDOT to improve and replace missing visitor information directional signage, adding over 15 new signs along main corridors

## Staff Advancement

### Conferences & Training

- GACVB Winter Meeting: Ann Hortman (Leadership Excellence Certification courses)
- Winter Chautauqua: Chris Cannon, Luke Chaffin, Debbie Galloway, Ann Hortman, Kathy Mathis, Linda Smith, Lisa Smith
- Georgia Governor's Tourism Conference: Luke Chaffin
- NCAA Host City Conference: Ann Hortman
- NASC Trade Show & Certified Sports Event Executive course training: Ann Hortman
- S.P.O.R.T.S. Conference & Trade Show: Ann Hortman

### Leadership

- Ann Hortman served as Vice-Chairman of the US Handcycling National Board of Directors and as member of USTA-GA Wheelchair Tennis Committee
- Chris Cannon served as President of Historic High Country Travel Association

### Advocacy

- Chris Cannon & Luke Chaffin attended Tourism & Hospitality Day at the Capitol, Atlanta
- Chris Cannon, Ann Hortman & Lisa Smith continued to present and speak on economic benefits of tourism

### Staff Changes

- Linda Smith retired from the GRCVB following 24 years of service
- Debbie Galloway (meetings/conventions) and Shelby Farner (group tour/religious market) promoted to Sales Coordinators
- Chris Cannon left the GRCVB for a new position as Tourism Project Manager for GDEcD
- Luke Chaffin's duties evolved to focus primarily on marketing and communications

## Last Stop Gift Shop & Rome-Floyd Visitor Center

### Visitor Center Metrics

- Total visitation for 2013: 2,280
- Brochures distributed: 54,583

### Personnel

- Summer intern assisted with marketing, sales and events

### Gift Shop Sales and Marketing

- Total sales: \$46,562; \$11,739 paid out to consignors/local artists
- Continued to develop Facebook presence, targeting female demographic
- Quickbooks was chosen as new POS system/inventory program for 2014 implementation

### Product Line

- 21 new consignment artists, authors and craftsmen added to gift shop line-up
- Clearance sales on older products were held to make room for new inventory

### Programs & Events

- Spring Art Market generated over \$22,000 for 70 local artists; vendor attendance up 56%
- Two open houses, three book signings, five trunk shows, and four off-site special events; five local artists were highlighted as a part of American Craft Week celebration

# 2014 Outlook

## 2014 Program of Work

### Marketing & Public Relations

- Institute specialized marketing campaigns/packages to drive summer traffic
- Reach out to and redevelop markets in Chattanooga, Tenn. and Birmingham, Ala.
- Recruit additional travel writers and increase national/international editorial exposure
- Update and market expanded Facility Guide for meetings, reunions and other special events
- Create and promote new amenities list for sports, group tour and meeting planners
- Produce marketing materials for relocating seniors with emphasis on arts community, local theater, senior facilities, golf/outdoor activities

### Meetings, Conventions & Groups

- Aggressively market The Forum to new and returning meeting groups for 2015 and 2016, increasing business by 25% each year with dedicated GRCVB sales coordinators
- Rebuild and roll out new themed travel packages: golf, Rome-mantic, Girls Weekend, special events
- Diversify tourism market of Georgia's Rome, reaching out to groups that have visited in the past and using local organizations and their affiliations to leverage new conventions/events
- Develop expanded itineraries for group tours using existing tourism product tools

### Rome Sports Commission

- Adopt a Standard Operating Procedure for Special Events
- Oversee Special Events Review Committee for special events applications
- Continue development of partnerships with local organizations: Rome-Floyd Parks & Recreation Authority, Rome Braves & R.A.C.E. Rome
- Hold quarterly sports roundtable meetings
- Expand partnerships with regional/national sports organizations

### Product Development

- Establish Downtown Visitor Center
- Partner with Downtown Development Authority and other affiliated organizations to create a GPS-enabled Downtown Rome/Between the Rivers Mobile App Tour
- Work with developers of the Tennis Center of Georgia to ensure compliance with standards and market to sports event groups once completion date is set
- Bring Jackson Hill Trail System into next phase with SPLOST-funded gathering areas
- Develop new ideas for use of existing infrastructure (i.e. Lindale Mill & Stonebridge Golf Club)
- Establish a dock for the *Sulzbacher Roman Holiday* at the Lock & Dam Park

### Last Stop Gift Shop & Rome-Floyd Visitor Center

- Streamline inventory and accounting system through implementation of new point of sale
- Increase gift shop sales through new consignors, unique products and social media expansion
- Develop relationships with local book clubs, garden clubs and art clubs

## Events booked for 2014

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Expected Attendees</b>
January	Southern Closed 16 Tennis Tournament	256
March	Berry Half-Marathon/10k/5k	2,000
	Atlanta Braves Exhibition Game	5,000
April	USPCA Region 22 K9 Certification Trials	75
	Georgia Spring Tennis Open	425
	Peach Belt Conference Track & Field Championship	800
	Clocktower Classic Handcycle Race	400
	CounterPoint Music Festival	25,000
May	NCCAA Track & Field National Championship	900
	Tri-for-the-Kids Youth & Olympic Triathlon	500
	Roman Roast on the River	6,800
	Up the Creek without a Pedal	700
	USTA Georgia Adult League Tennis Championship	1,000
	North Georgia Jr Open Tennis Tournament	600
June	Georgia State Jr Challenger Tennis Tournament	600
	Bear Creek Rally Aerobatic Competition	35
July	Georgia Jr Open Tennis Tournament	800
	Cave Spring Motorcycle Rally	1,200
August	Clocktower Classic Wheelchair Tennis Tournament	100
	Gary Tillman Memorial Clocktower 5k Road Race	500
	Southern Closed Doubles Championship	400
	Big Cat Quest Tournament	100
September	Rome International Film Festival	1,500
	Leadership Georgia	100
October	Wings Over North Georgia Air Show	50,000
	Going Caching! Geocaching Mega Event	1,000
	Chiaha Harvest Fair	13,000
November	NCCAA Victory Bowl	500
December	Winter Art Market	3,500
	Rome 30k Relay & 5k	500

# About the CVB

## GRCVB Staff

### Administration

Lisa Smith *Executive Director*  
Kathy Mathis *Deputy Director*  
Ann Hortman *Rome Sports Commission Director*  
Luke Chaffin *Special Projects Coordinator*  
Debbie Galloway *Sales Coordinator*  
Shelby Farrer *Sales Coordinator*

### Gift Shop & Visitor Center

Charlene Mathis *Manager*  
Debbie Law *Assistant Manager*  
Charlotte Ball *Customer Service Specialist*  
BeBe Smith *Customer Service Specialist*  
Robin Shamblin *Customer Service Specialist*

## 2014 GRCVB Board of Directors

Mike Burnes, Chair  
John Spranza, Vice Chair  
Larry Arrington  
Jennifer Beard  
John Bennett  
Paula Blevins  
Harry Brock  
Bill Collins  
Chris Darwin  
Erin Elrod  
Richard Garland  
Vickie Hill  
Kristen Kinsey  
Sandra Lindsey  
Larry Maxey  
Jamie McCord  
Gay Nichols  
Anil Patel  
Joyce Smith  
Julie Smith  
Alice Stevens  
Tannika Wester

Hillshire Brands  
Georgia Highlands College  
Shorter University  
Berry College  
City of Rome Manager  
C&S Trophies  
Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce  
Rome City Commission  
Comfort Suites  
Rome Braves  
Rome-Floyd Parks & Recreation Authority  
Synovus Mortgage  
Georgia Northwestern Technical College  
Community Volunteer  
Floyd County Commission  
Floyd County Manager  
Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham  
Country Inn & Suites/Holiday Inn Express  
Fairview/E.S. Brown Heritage Corporation  
Cycle Therapy  
Oak Hill & The Martha Berry Museum  
Darlington School

## Greater Rome Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Greater Rome Convention & Visitors Bureau (GRCVB) and Rome Sports Commission is the official destination and sports marketing organization of Rome and Floyd County, Georgia.

**GreaterRome**  
convention & visitors bureau

**ROME**  
Georgia  
**SPORTS**

Greater Rome Convention & Visitors Bureau

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