

Little Rock is...



BIG ON TOURS



Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau—www.littlerock.com

July 2004

PO Box 3232 Little Rock, AR 72203

800-844-4781 or 501-376-4781

Issue One

The National Tour Association Tour Operator Spring Meet in Little Rock Deemed a BIG Success



Little Rock, along with a host of tourism partners from around the state, welcomed the National Tour Association Tour Operator Spring Meet March 24-28, 2004, at the Peabody Little Rock. The meet was kicked off with the "Top of the Rock" party held in the Little Rock Club located on the 34th floor of the Regions Bank building. President Clinton made a video

appearance and welcomed the entire delegation. The over 300 participants enjoyed twelve sight seeing tours over two days, three Arkansas FAM tours, and lunch with Mike Huckabee, Governor of Arkansas—where everyone learned to call the Hogs. Great food, good information from the seminars, and lots of fun was had by all!

THANKS TO ALL NTA TOUR OPERATORS WHO ATTENDED—WE LOVED HAVING YOU IN OUR HOMETOWN!

TAP into Southern Treasures

Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee and Missouri have joined forces with the Travel Alliance Partners. TAP is comprised of 26 tour operator companies—22 in the United States and 2 in Canada. The joint marketing venture, *TAP into Southern Treasures*, features five new itineraries into the "Southern Treasures" region.

Marketing of the new itineraries, as well as itineraries already existing into the region, will be a joint venture. The TAP members will market the tours they are responsible for in a variety of ways: catalogs, newsletter, fliers, e-mails, websites, newspaper ads, etc. Other marketing efforts include the professional development of a *TAP into Southern Treasures* destination magazine featuring the new itineraries, a snapshot of the "Southern Treasures" region, as well as a snapshot for each city and state. The tour operators will mail out about 10,000 magazines. It will also be mailed to bank clubs, group leaders and all NTA and ABA tour operators, about 10,000 churches, as well as distributed at consumer trade shows. A *TAP into Southern Treasures* website will be developed with more in-depth information than the magazine and a CD ROM will be provided to the tour operators for use in their selling efforts. Each city and state will have a link from the "Southern Treasures" website to their destination website. All advertising efforts will direct the consumer to the main website.

Finally, TAP members will qualify their group leaders and the DMO partners will provide FAM tours into the region based on the itineraries developed and offered by the tour operators.

"The beauty about this project," stated Ken McGhie of FunScape Adventures, "is that DMOs spend hundreds of thousands of dollars hoping they get the attention of one tour operator with their advertising—this is a guaranteed thing! Product is on the street and in the catalogs."

This new and innovative approach to marketing motor coach tours is changing the way business is done! Twenty-six tour operators selling into the same set of departure dates for the five itineraries and marketing efforts paid for and developed by DMOs and suppliers is a win-win situation. The model for this project was based on the *TAP into Arkansas* project. To take a look at that project go to www.tapintoarkansas.com or give Theresa Kyzer a call at 800-844-4781 or e-mail tkyzer@littlerock.com.

Katina Brown joins LRCVB Tour & Travel

Katina Brown joined the Little Rock CVB tour and travel department in November 2003. Formerly with the convention services department, Katina has been with the bureau for seven years. She specializes in the Family Reunion Market as well as handles the general group tour market. We are very excited to have her aboard. Now that she has two trade shows under her belt [Travel South and AATC] give her a call at (501) 370-3234 or e-mail her at kbrown@littlerock.com!



Inside This Edition

- NTA Tour Operator Spring Meet—2004
- Katina Brown joins LRCVB
- TAP into Southern Treasures
- William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park
- Holidays in the Heart of Arkansas
- Hotel Hot Deals—90 Days Only
- News from the North
- City Tour with a Twist
- Arkansas Globecoming—History in the Making
- Enter and Win BIG
- Featured Itinerary





Hotel Hot Deals



Take advantage of these special offers by booking your group to overnight in Little Rock within the next 90 days! Be sure to let them know you learned about it here!!!!

Baymont Inn & Suites

1010 Breckenridge Drive—WLR

The Baymont Inn will offer you two complimentary rooms per Motor coach along with our standard welcome reception, on-board greeting, welcome/departure gift and welcome letters on every pillow.
Tracy Morales (501) 225-7007 X 114
E-mail: tracymorales@baymontinns.com

Capital Hotel

111 West Markham—Downtown

The Capital Hotel is pleased to offer a special rate for the bus driver and an upgrade for the tour operator/escort. This offer is available for 2004 based on availability.
Ginny Moulton (501) 370-7066
E-mail: ginny@thecapitalhotel.com

Comfort Inn & Suites—Downtown

707 Interstate 30

The Comfort Inn and Suites Downtown will provide a complimentary room for your bus driver and upgrade the tour director to a suite! Call now and book your group today!
Joel Smith (501) 687-7700
E-mail: jsmith@comfortinnlittlerock.com

Courtyard by Marriott

10900 Financial Centre Parkway—West LR

Book your 2005 Tour at the Courtyard by Marriott and receive a CHAMPANGE and STRAWBERRIES reception upon the groups' arrival!
Linda Young (501) 227-6000
E-mail: linda.young@marriott.com

DoubleTree Hotel

424 West Markham—Downtown

Book your 2005 tour within the next 90 days and we'll give you Double Points and Miles through Hilton Honors for your tour. If you're not already a HHonors Member, we'll get you signed up.
Diana McClung (501) 372-4371
E-mail: dmcclung@doubletreelr.com

Embassy Suites—WLR

11301 Financial Centre Parkway

The Embassy Suites will provide a full cooked-to-order breakfast for your tour participants and one comp suite for every 20 rooms.
Karen Lafferty (501) 537-3307
E-mail: karen.lafferty@jqh.com

Hampton Inn & Suites

1301 South Shackleford—West LR

Tour Director will get 1 complimentary suite for bookings within the next 90 days.
Turner Menefee or Beth Boyd
(501) 223-3000
E-mail: turner.menefee@lrar.com

Holiday Inn Airport and Holiday Inn Express Airport I-440 at the Airport Exit

Book your tour at either the Holiday Inn Airport or the Holiday Inn Express Airport and the tour escort will receive a room upgrade. The Holiday Inn Express features a deluxe breakfast bar free to your tour participants. You can have your choice of either a fruit and cheese tray reception (estimated time of arrival is required) or an "apple send-off" featuring a grand good bye poem read to your group once they board the coach.
Jan Jewell (501) 490-1000
E-mail: janhiasales@aol.com

Holiday Inn Presidential Center—Downtown 600 Interstate 30

The Holiday Inn Presidential Conference Center is pleased to offer the following package if booked in the 90 days and consumed by April 30, 2005. A Red, White and Blue Reception, 10% off Regular Tour Bus Rate (Call for Rates and Availability) and Upgrade for Tour Director
Teresa Miller (501) 235-5612
E-mail: teresaamiller@comcast.net

Holiday Inn Select

201 South Shackleford—West LR

If you book your tour within 90 days we will give 20,000 Priority Club points or 5,000 Airline miles for every tour!
Turner Menefee or Beth Boyd
(501) 223-3000
E-mail: turner.menefee@lrar.com

Legacy at the Cambridge Suites

625 West Capitol Avenue—Downtown

The Historic Legacy Hotel and Suites is happy to be able to offer a FREE lemonade and cookie reception on arrival and a FREE continental breakfast for all tour operators that book with our hotel within the next 90 days. We are a national historic property that has just been completely renovated. We can't wait to welcome you to Little Rock!
Kevin Kite at 501-374-0100
E-mail: dos@legacyhotel.com

Peabody Little Rock—Downtown

#3 Statehouse Plaza

The Peabody Little Rock will upgrade the tour escorts room and add a welcome amenity for all tour guest rooms for every tour booking more than 20 rooms within the next 90 days!
Courtney Barton (501) 399-8043
E-mail: courtney.barton@peabodylittlerock.com

Wingate Inn Little Rock

1212 South Shackleford - WLR

Make reservations for your 2005 Little Rock Tours with Wingate Inn and receive very special Tour Rates that are inclusive of Baggage Handling, Welcome Reception with Cookies and Punch, Little Rock Souvenirs and one of the Best Continental Buffets in town. Parking is free for your Tour Bus. The tour operator's room is complimentary and the bus driver's room is half price! Trust Wingate Inn's Staff to handle the details necessary to assure your travelers a Perfect Stay.
Virginia Hicks (501) 227-6800
E-mail: hicks2002z@aol.com





**BOOK NOW—
The William J. Clinton
Presidential Center & Park
Wants Your Group**

Be among the first to book your group at the only presidential library built with you in mind. More than a 'museum' the Clinton Center is set in a twenty-seven acre park along the banks of the Arkansas River and is the east anchor of the River Market District. Special Center Features:

- Multi-Purpose Great Hall
 - Indoor-Outdoor Café overlooking the Arkansas River (seats 100 indoors)
 - Classrooms
 - 80-seat Theater
 - Replicas of the Oval Office and the Cabinet Room
 - 20,000 square feet of museum exhibit space (permanent and temporary)
 - Park pavilion with restrooms and eating area
 - Pedestrian bridge across the Arkansas River (ideal for receptions and events)
 - On-site parking for over 300 vehicles
 - On-site school bus and tour bus parking
 - Quality hotels and restaurants within walking distance
- Short walks on President Clinton Avenue to Little Rock's River Market, the city's popular cultural, residential, retail and entertainment district; the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Center with over 225,000 square feet of meeting space; the Little Rock Public Library; and the Old State House Museum, where President Clinton announced his candidacy in 1991 and where he celebrated election night victories in 1992 and 1996.

**For more information contact:
(501) 370-5050
www.clintontours.com**

Ring in the New Year in Little Rock, Arkansas

This year in Little Rock for the first time experience a **New Year's Eve Victorian Ball**. The ball begins at 8pm with period dance instructions and introduction to period dance musicians. At 9pm the honorable Lt. Governor Winthrop Rockefeller and his wife will lead the Grande Marche. Dance cards and favors will be included with the tickets as well as heavy h'douvere's. At midnight, champagne toasts will ring in the new year with complimentary crystal flutes provided as a remembrance of an incredible 19th Century Victorian Ball! There will be a cash bar and you could even win a prize if you dress in period costume.

**For more information contact:
Sharon Welch Blair (501) 374-7966
E-mail: hostess@theempress.com**

Holidays in the Heart of Arkansas

Now is the time of year to think about that last minute holiday/fall tour. Little Rock has always been a great place for a Mystery tour—especially if your group has never been here before and what better time of year than the fall?



In **October** you can experience

Little Rock's Own Tales from the Crypt as one of the city's premier arts magnet school students re-enact stories of the past in historic Mt. Holly Cemetery. Enjoy ghost stories and tea, lunch, or dinner in the beautiful **Manor House** or **The Empress of Little Rock**. Bring out the animals in your group at the Little Rock Zoo during the month of October during **BOO at the Zoo!** On Halloween night the ghouls and goblins come out for the **BIG Boozeum Bash** at all Little Rock museums—special exhibits, candy, and ghostly stories are a hit with young and old alike. **Marlsgate Plantation** is always a delight during the holidays—owner, David Garner will entertain you with stories of days gone by in a way that your group will never forget!



December is the month of lights in Little Rock—our local receptive operators know all the hot spots and for a small fee they will jump on your bus and show you the town! They might even include hot cocoa and cookies! The **River Market District** is lit with thousands of lights and the first Saturday of December is the **Big Jingle Jubilee**—complete with holiday parade, the lighting of the state capitol and fireworks! Free concerts, hand-made crafts, and open house at the **Arkansas Arts Center** and bed and breakfasts in the **Historic Quapaw Quarter District** promise to make your tour a complete joy.

The **Hometown Holidays Festival** covers the entire city of North Little Rock during the month of December with special events such as the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra's Christmas Concert, the annual Christmas parade, a Holiday Arts & Crafts fair, and the **Second Annual "Holiday Lights in Burns Park."** Last year, approximately 20,000 people drove through one of the largest city parks in the nation to see a beautiful display of holiday lights. This year's festival promises to be even more fun with holiday music playing throughout the drive and special events such as a Night Run, a mini-parade through the lights, and much more.

**Request your Holiday Schedule of Events
Call 1-800-844-4781, ext. 3228
E-mail tkyzer@littlerock.com
www.littlerock.com**



News from the North

Karen Trevino joined the North Little Rock Visitors Bureau in July 2003 as the new executive director. Many of you will remember Karen from the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism's group travel office. Karen loves this industry and over the past year has made a BIG impact in not only North Little Rock but the entire heart of Arkansas.

The revitalization taking place in downtown Little Rock has spread across the Arkansas River into North Little Rock. Along with the "sprucing up" of historic downtown Argenta, North Little Rock has many new attractions on tap.

The **USS Razorback**, a 311-foot submarine that was present in Tokyo Bay at the signing of the Peace Treaty ending WWII, is making its new home in North Little Rock. The submarine is named after a species of whale although many would like to make a connection to the University of Arkansas' razorback mascot. The USS Razorback is the only boat to have earned battle ribbons in WWII and Vietnam and has been in service in Turkey for the last 30 years. The submarine arrives in North Little Rock the end of June.

Joining the submarine will be the **Hoga Tugboat**, which fought battleship fires during the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor and gained notoriety for its rescue efforts and fighting fires on the battleship Arizona. The Hoga carries National Historic Landmark designation as the only surviving vessel of the attack on Pearl Harbor and should arrive in North Little Rock in November of this year. Both the Hoga and the USS Razorback are part of a \$10.5 million

Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum, which is now in the planning and fundraising stages.

The **Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame** is a \$3.5 million project to be located inside the Alltel Arena with outside entrance on the promenade side right off I-30. This facility will feature memorabilia for football, basketball, baseball, Olympics, thoroughbred racing, auto racing, golf, tennis, swimming, fishing, archery, track & field, sports broadcasting, national championships, coaching legends and much more. Construction on this fun and interactive museum starts this summer.

The Shoppes at North Hills is an \$80 million open-air retail and entertainment center featuring something for every interest. The Bass Pro Shop is on board to be one of the center's major anchors and an outdoor nature park representative of the state's geography will be on site. This new center will be located on 120 acres along Interstate 40 and will be near hotels and restaurants. Construction on this center should begin in late summer 2004.

For more information on North Little Rock contact:



LOOKING NORTH IS LOOKING GOOD!

Robin Alexander
Tel: (501) 758-1424
E-mail: ralexander@northlittlerock.org

City Tour With a Twist

This is the tour everyone is talking about! It's not just another city bus tour, it's an attraction in itself. There's NOTHING like it in the country! Events in central Arkansas commanded worldwide



attention... in politics, in civil rights, even in Hollywood. Now you can hear all about it on this enlightening and entertaining tour. We don't just offer fun facts and historical insight, but we also play the video footage and news clips that made our landmarks famous!

If you are coming into town on a charter bus, we have group escorts that can steer you around town and reveal for you the stories that make this city so interesting. If you need help finding lodging, meals, or additional entertainment, our expert staff has great connections with the best hospitality providers in the state. They can get you deals you may not be able to get on your own!

For more information contact:
(501) TOUR-BUS (501-868-7287)
www.littlerocktours.com

William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park to Draw Thousands during Grand Opening Celebration

The top leaders, celebrities, Presidents and people from around the globe are coming to Little Rock for five days of history – November 14-18, 2004.

The grand opening of The William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park marks the biggest single event in our city's history. Little Rock is rolling out the red carpet with week-long festivities leading up to the grand opening

ceremony. Located on the banks of the Arkansas River in downtown Little Rock's River Market District, the Clinton Center will house the largest archival collection in American Presidential history. The 150,000



square-foot center will include the museum, the archival collection, and educational and research facilities. The main building of the state-of-the-art Clinton Center takes the form of a glass bridge symbolizing President Clinton's theme of "Building a Bridge to the 21st Century." As the first presidential library built with tourism in mind, the Clinton Center will put Little Rock on the map as an international tourism destination.

For more information visit:
www.arkansasglobecoming.com.



ENTER & WIN!!!!

If you have a group booked in Little Rock or North Little Rock the rest of 2004 or in 2005 fill out the following information to be entered in a drawing for great prizes!

Name of Company _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Overnight dates & hotel utilized

You will be entered in the drawing one time for each set of dates. So if you are staying here five times then you will have five chances to win! Winner notified by mail.

Fill out the above form and mail it to
Theresa Kyzer—LRCVB
PO Box 3232
Little Rock, AR 72203
or fax to (501) 374-2255



Village Tours of Wichita, Kansas at the grand opening of the Little Rock Visitors Center at Historic Curran Hall

LRCVB Provides a Free Punch and Cookie Welcome Reception at Historic Curran Hall to all Tour Groups

The Walters—Curran—Bell home, commonly known as Curran Hall, was built in 1842 in the Jeffersonian Classicism style. When Curran Hall was built it was a grand, upper-class residence with expansive property stretching over what is today two city blocks. In contrast, other early Little Rock residents of more modest means lived in smaller rustic log cabins or simple wood-frame homes.

Curran Hall's history is rich. Through the years, just five families owned the home until the Little Rock Advertising and Promotion Commission purchased it in 1996 to save one of the city's oldest homes from demolition.

After six years of extensive restoration of both the home and the grounds, Curran Hall opened as Little Rock's first visitor center.

Located just five blocks from the River Market District in downtown, Curran Hall is easily accessible from Interstate 30 and is the perfect introduction to Arkansas' capitol city. Take a break, with a FREE punch and cookie reception, while costumed volunteers sweep you away with stories of days gone by. Explore the house and historic gardens and learn the history of Little Rock and Arkansas. Your group might even get a special treat!

To schedule your FREE welcome reception or for more information contact:

**Cathy Cerrato—Visitor Center Manager
Or Theresa Kyzer—Tour & Travel Sales Manager
800-844-4781 or 501-376-4781**





A Note from the Editor

As you can see there are a lot of great, new, and exciting things going on in the greater Little Rock metropolitan area! Of course, we still have our groups favorite stand-bys like Murry's Dinner Playhouse, which has served up a heaping helping of smash-hit Broadway comedies and musicals for thirty plus years, along with that all you can eat buffet. David Garner is still showing off his beautiful Marlsgate Plantation with fantastic food and unbelievable stories! The IMAX Theater and Aerospace Education Center still provides great box lunches, a tour of the Aerospace Center and a movie all for one low price. The people who work at our nine museums (featuring everything from military history to life on the frontier) still provide your tour participants with hospitality that you can't get anywhere else. Of course, you can tour our three historic districts and see homes of every type of architecture you can think of—and some you haven't seen before! Then there are the Presidential highlights... So fill that coach with boomers, students, or seniors and mix it up a little in the rock...tour some of the new stuff, some of the old stuff, stuff your group with the best southern food, and get a good nights rest—just to start all over in the morning. If you need any help, I am at your beck and call.

Theresa Main-Kyzer Tour and Travel Sales Manager
501-370-3228 or tkyzer@littlerock.com

Featured Itinerary—The All-American Mystery Tour

Everyone likes a good mystery, a little intrigue and Little Rock has always been a great mystery tour destination. Try this out for your next mystery tour!

Looking for something new? **The All-American Mystery Tour** might just be your answer! Here are a few ideas to get your "creative juices" flowing to plan this excellent adventure for July 2005! Of course, you can always give us a call and we can help with all the details!

As your customers board the coach hand out those old-fashioned election hats. You know the ones...straw with the red, white, and blue ribbon band. Next hand out small American flags, red, white and blue pencils, or other items with an American theme.



Plan your itinerary around these Presidential Library cities...

Independence, Missouri	www.visitindependence.com	800-748-7323	
Harry S. Truman	www.trumanlibrary.org		816-268-8295
Abilene, Kansas	www.abilenekansas.org	800-569-5915	
Dwight D. Eisenhower	www.eisenhower.utexas.edu		785-263-6700
Austin, Texas	www.austintexas.org	800-926-2282	
Lyndon Baines Johnson	www.lbjlib.utexas.edu		512-721-0200
College Station, Texas	www.bryan-collegestation.org	800-777-8292	
George W. Bush	www.bushlibrary.tamu.edu		979-691-4000
Little Rock, Arkansas	www.littlerock.com	800-844-4781	
William J. Clinton	www.clintonpresidentialcenter.org		501-372-0202

To make this tour even more memorable, plan it around the Independence Day holiday! In Little Rock we celebrate the 4th with a BIG bang! Visit the recently opened **William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park** located along the banks of the Arkansas River in Little Rock's fastest growing entertainment headquarters. Take a guided tour of the **Arkansas State Capitol**, which is a scaled down replica of the Nation's Capitol in Washington, DC. Next on the must-do list is a tour of the **Old State House Museum**. Little Rock's first state capitol building was brought to the nations attention when Bill Clinton announced his candidacy and made his acceptance speeches right on the front lawn! Visit the expanded **Historic Arkansas Museum** during their annual Territorial Fair—living history actors will sweep you away to days gone by when the work was hard, life was simple, and Little Rock was on the edge of the western frontier. Finish off the day by heading down the block and across the street to Riverfront Park for the annual **"Pops on the River"** concert performed by the award winning Arkansas Symphony. This outstanding event culminates at dusk with a thirty minute, eye-popping fireworks extravaganza that rivals the one in our nations capitol!

All this with your choice of more than 500 restaurants and over 7,000 guest rooms makes this tour a winner!

The secret is out...Little Rock is a great destination for a Mystery Tour!

