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Tourism Momentum

**Important Dates**

**Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Commission Meeting**  
9:30 a.m.  
April 21, 2005  
OKC CVB  
189 West Sheridan  
Oklahoma City

**Oklahoma Tourism Promotion Advisory Committee Meeting**  
10:00 a.m.  
May 5, 2005  
Location TBD



# Tourism Momentum

NEWS FOR STAKEHOLDERS IN OKLAHOMA TOURISM

## Tourism-Related Bills Pass Legislature

The second legislative deadline has been reached and many new bills have been introduced to the legislature that affect the tourism industry. Following is a list of some of the bills currently being considered and their status:

**SB 365:** Relates to the development of an agritourism program in Oklahoma—*passed Senate 46-0, passed House Natural Resources, passed on to House;*

**SB 403:** Ensures that all monies expended from the Tourism Promotion Revolving Fund shall reflect a consistent brand and image in the promotion of Oklahoma tourism—*passed Senate 43-0, passed House Tourism & Recreation, sent to Governor;*

**SB 409:** Expands tax credit eligibility for any certified historic building located in an increment or incentive district created pursuant to the Local Development Act—*passed Senate 42-1, sent to House;*

**SB 823:** Adds “preservation and protection” to the mission and duties of the state park system;

Establishes the Tourism & Recreation Commission as a permanent oversight body;

Eliminates span of control issues caused by three separate managers for park properties (parks, resorts and golf) by consolidating control under a unified park management system;

Provides career progression opportunities for park rangers;

Eliminates three obsolete and unnecessary revolving funds: Golf Course Operations, Quartz Mountain, and the Tourism Equipment Revolving Fund. These funds will be consolidated into the Tourism Department’s main revolving fund.

*This bill passed the Senate 32-10 and has been sent to the House.*

## Watch E-Mail for New Cooperative Program Info

On May 2, we will announce details about the department's newest cooperative program designed to help tourism partners dramatically increase their exposure at consumer travel shows. The program is perfect for any budget size, with partnership opportunities available for as little as \$100.

**Because of the limited availability of the number of partners who can participate in the program, it will be offered on a first-come, first-**

**served basis.** An industry-wide e-mail blast with program details will be sent on May 2. If you would prefer to receive the information in another format (fax or regular mail), please contact Mequeal Caldwell at 405-521-3981. Program details can also be found in the industry section of [www.travelok.com](http://www.travelok.com) on May 2.

Don't miss your chance to take advantage of this new opportunity!

**KFOR-TV  
Channel 4  
For the Weekend  
4:30 pm Each Thursday**

Catch Tourism Deputy Director Hardy Watkins at 4:30 p.m. each Thursday on "For the Weekend" with Linda Cavanaugh for the latest information on events throughout Oklahoma.

**April 14**

**That's Italian**

- Lovera's—Krebs
- Landmark Italian Restaurants—Krebs & McAlester
- Ambassador Hotel—Tulsa
- Philbrook Gardens—Tulsa

**April 21**

**Oklahoma Pride**

- OKC Memorial Museum
- Will Rogers Birthplace—Claremore
- Mohawk Indian Lodge—Clinton

**April 28**

**Creative Energy**

- City Arts Classes—OKC
- Percussive Arts Museum—Lawton
- Public Murals
- May Fair Arts Festival—Norman



**OTRD to Sponsor Sailing Regatta**



The 2005 J-22 North American Championship sailing regatta is coming to Oklahoma City!

OTRD, in conjunction with the Dept. of Commerce, is one of several sponsors of the event, set for May 19-21 at Lake Hefner.

According to Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett and the Oklahoma City Boat Club, Oklahoma has landed one of the most prestigious national sailboat races in the country.

So what is a J-22? It's a sleek, fiberglass racing boat. In the world of sailing, J-22s are known as the "Porsches" of sailboats. Each boat weighs about 1,800 pounds, measures 22 feet in length, and in racing mode, holds a maxi-

mum crew weight of 605 pounds—three regular-sized crew, or four lightweight. The J-22s also use two sails and a spinnaker, the vibrant multi-colored sail featured in sailing photos.

Dramatic race starts and mark roundings can be exhilarating, as captains vie for the best positions, using tactical strategies. They adjust sail trim continuously during the race to maintain maximum boat speed.

Helmsmen and crew often sport racing credentials from national championships, the Olympics, or The America's Cup.

"You just don't think of sailing on the prairie, but honestly, Lake Hefner with its winds makes for one of the best sailing lakes in the

country, and that's the reason we were able to land this event," said Francis Beling, regatta chairman. "In the J-22 world, it's a big, big deal."

Practice races will be held May 18. Official races begin at 9 a.m. May 19 as the boats leave the harbor at Lake Hefner. Two to three races will be held each day through May 21.

Approximately 70 to 85 sailboats are expected to race in the event. Participants will be coming from across the U.S., Canada and possibly Mexico. The athletes are expected to spend about \$500,000 while visiting the state.

Don't miss this exciting, one-of-a-kind event!

For more information, visit [www.2005j22na.com](http://www.2005j22na.com) or [www.okcboatclub.com](http://www.okcboatclub.com).

**Discover OK Welcomes New Staff**



*Michelle Wagner*

Joining *Discover Oklahoma* as the production team's new associate

producer is Michelle "Shel" Wagner.

Wagner is back in her home state of Oklahoma, after an 18-year stint in Los Angeles, CA, where she earned her Master of Fine Arts degree from UCLA's School of Theatre, Film and Television, before working as an independent film-

maker, television producer and writer. She will be calling upon these experiences as she researches, writes and produces stories for the *Discover Oklahoma* television series.

Wagner and her husband Kurt Kaya are settling into a 100-year-old home in the heart of Kingfisher's Main Street, along with their two daughters—Cricket, 5, and Prairie Kei, 2. Both girls were named in honor of Wagner's Oklahoma roots and love for the state.

**Publications Deadlines**

**Mark your calendars for these upcoming deadlines:**

**May 16** - Final deadline for ad submissions and copy updates for the RV, Lakes and Camping Guide;

**June 15** - 2006 calendar of events submissions due to the department;

**Aug. 1** - Ad contracts, payments and materials due to the department for the 2006 Oklahoma Travel Guide.

You will be receiving more information about these publications in the mail soon.

## Find Out What's 'In' Across Our State

Each Sunday learn more about Oklahoma by picking up the *Destinations* section of *The Oklahoman*. OTRD's weekly "Discover Oklahoma" column features information on exciting places and events across Oklahoma.



OKC

Want to know what's 'in' and what's cool enough to attract the cultural creatives to Oklahoma? Check out "Cool

Cities" which ran in the Apr. 3 edition, but can still be read online at TravelOk.com. Everyone loves music, and music festivals abound across our state. You're sure to find one that suits your musical tastes in the Apr. 10 column on "Music Festivals Across Oklahoma."



Juneteenth in Tulsa

Tenkiller State Park will host a grand opening of its



Lake Tenkiller

new scuba park at the end of April. To learn more about this exciting adventure attraction, pick up the Apr. 17 issue highlighting the new park. You can find all of these stories and more in the *Media Professionals* section of [www.TravelOK.com](http://www.TravelOK.com).

## Legislation to Impact Film Industry in OK

In the Film & Music Office (F&MO) this month, there are three words: legislation, legislation, legislation!

As recently as a few years ago, when film producers contacted the office, they were curious about locations. Changes in the way films are funded and a competitive international climate have caused a shift in the way film commissions throughout the world do business. Now, when the phone rings in the Film & Music Office, the first question is often, "What incentives does Oklahoma offer?"

In 2001, the state enacted "The Compete with Canada Film Act." This piece of legislation created a 15 percent cash back rebate on qualified film expenditures within the state. This incentive is attractive to film producers, but it is equally attractive to economic development experts. The idea of, "We'll give you 15 cents and you'll give us a dollar," is similar to incentives used to recruit other types of industry to the state. This aggressive piece of legislation provided

Oklahoma with a competitive edge, but the bill did not provide for a permanent, reliable funding source. HB 1756 would provide that funding source in the form of a replenishment mechanism.

This legislative session, there are three bills under consideration. Each will impact the film and music industries in Oklahoma in a different way.

**HB 1716** would provide 25 percent tax credits on profits from an Oklahoma film or music project or company when profits reinvested in the production of another Oklahoma film or music project or company. *Passed the House floor and passed the Senate Finance Committee on Mar. 22.*

**HB 1756** - Provides an annual funding mechanism for the Oklahoma Film Enhancement Rebate Program with cap of \$2 million per year. *Passed House 99-1 and sent to Senate Finance. Scheduled to be heard the week of Apr. 4.*

**SB 877** would add film or music production facilities to eligible recipients of the

Oklahoma Tourism Development Act. *Passed House Revenue & Tax Committee unanimously Mar. 23.*

These three bills will likely be merged into one comprehensive bill later in session. For more details, go to [www.lsb.state.ok.us](http://www.lsb.state.ok.us).

In support of the bills, FM&O will host a reception for state leaders and lawmakers on Apr. 26 to discuss one-on-one the importance of these bills and the relevance of the film and music industries to Oklahoma. F&MO has successfully secured private sector financial sponsorship for the event which will be held at The Will Rogers Theatre in Oklahoma City. The office staff is also producing a short video to showcase Oklahomans who work in the film, television and music industries across the nation as well as in Oklahoma.

If you have any questions about how the legislation might impact your community, please contact the Oklahoma Film & Music Office at 800-766-3456.



Catch *Discover Oklahoma* at 6:30 p.m. Saturdays on KWTW-9 in Oklahoma City, KOTV-6 in Tulsa, and KSWO-7 in Lawton. Highlights for the April episodes of *Discover Oklahoma* include:

### April 16

#### "Oklahoma Pride"

OKC Memorial Museum 10-Year Anniversary—OKC  
Prairie House Foundation Restoration—Duncan  
Mohawk Lodge Indian Store—Clinton  
Will Rogers Birthplace—Claremore  
Holy City of the Wichitas—Lawton

### April 23

#### "Creative Energy"

City Arts Classes—OKC  
Public Murals—UCO in Edmond  
OKC Museum Experience Brady Street—Tulsa  
Percussive Arts Museum—Lawton  
Iris Festival—Ponca City

### April 30

#### "The Good Life" (Luxury Getaways)

Luna Charters—Texoma  
High Dollar RV Trip  
Aaron's Gate & Arcadian Inn—Edmond  
LaVille Inn & Coffeehouse—Davis  
Colcord Hotel Preview

*Please note all shows subject to change.*

If you have story ideas for *Discover Oklahoma*, contact Becky King at 405-522-0615, email at [Becky@TravelOK.com](mailto:Becky@TravelOK.com).

## Fam Tour to Highlight Northeastern Oklahoma

The Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department, in conjunction with Green Country Marketing Association, hosted a Military Familiarization Tour Apr. 5–8. The purpose of the tour was to assist travel counselors who work with military members and their families in planning recreational travel.

The tour introduced military

travel counselors to all that northeastern Oklahoma has to offer in order to better equip them to communicate to their clients what a great travel destination that area truly is.

"The best way to help sell Oklahoma is to 'sell the sellers' by showing them firsthand what we have to offer," said Jackie Stewart, executive director of Green

Country. "We have world-class events and attractions, metropolitan areas, laid-back rural areas, beautiful scenery and friendly people."

Highlights of the tour included Cherokee Casino & Resort, Will Rogers birthplace, Woolaroc, Price Tower, Oklahoma Aquarium, the Tulsa Air & Space Museum, and the Five Civil-

ized Tribes Museum, among others.

Participating military bases included: Tinker, McConnell, Goodfellow, Altus, and Vance Air Force Bases; Ft. Riley and Ft. Sill Army Bases; and McAlester Army Ammunition Base.

## What Makes A 'Cool' City?

What makes a city "cool?" Is it green parks, sidewalk bistros, jazz clubs and coffee houses? Or is nothing more than a quality neighborhood school, a lucrative job, a reasonable cost of living and plenty of choices for housing?

Participants of the LEAD (Leadership Education and Arts Development) 2005 conference recently got the chance to find out when they explored the link between arts and economic development. Conference participants learned to create their own brand of "cool cities" in Oklahoma during "Creating Cool Oklahoma Cities" held Apr. 6 in Tulsa and Apr. 7 in Oklahoma City.

LEAD 2005 featured Michigan's *Cool Cities* initiative, a strategic effort focused on revitalizing communities, building community spirit and retaining local talent in cities of all sizes across the state of Michigan.

In addition, a networking reception and wine tasting featuring wine from Oklahoma vineyards was held following the conference.

For more information about LEAD, visit the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits Web site at [www.centerfornonprofits.us](http://www.centerfornonprofits.us).

## OKC Memorial to Honor 10-Year Anniversary

The Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum will be honoring the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of "those who were killed, those who survived and those changed forever" by the 1995 bombing with a variety of events and ceremonies during the National Week of Hope, April 17–24.

Nearly 10 years ago, the lives of Oklahomans and countless others were changed forever with the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. Since the tragedy, officials have worked diligently to educate, inform, and inspire hope and healing.

Some of the activities planned for the week include:

**Apr. 17: A Day of Faith** - Religious congregations throughout the metro area are asked to recognize the hope and healing Oklahoma City has experienced during their weekly services.

**Apr. 19: A Day of Remembrance** - Traditional remembrance ceremony is planned, highlighted by observing 168 seconds of silence and reading the names of those who were killed.

Survivors and their journeys during the past 10 years will also be recognized.

**Apr. 22: A Day of Caring** - Join some new Oklahoma artists and some familiar Oklahoma artists as they join together at the Ford Center to say thanks to the people of the State of Oklahoma. This will be a night to remember, and you won't want to miss out on seeing all of the great local talent combined with some of Oklahoma's treasures!

**Apr. 24: A Run to Remember** - The fifth annual Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon will begin on Robinson between Fifth and Sixth Streets and weave through the city. You can find more information on the marathon by visiting [www.okcmarathon.com](http://www.okcmarathon.com). Find a reason to run or participate in this special year.

## On the Road Again

Look for one of our OTRD trade-show booths at the following events:

**Apr. 12 & 13**—Mid-Southwest Food Show in OKC

**Apr. 22 & 23**—OKC Memorial Marathon

For more information on dates and locations, contact Sandi Lomonaco at [Sandi@TravelOK.com](mailto:Sandi@TravelOK.com) or 405-522-0654.

