

Tourism News

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE NORTH ALABAMA TRAVEL & TOURISM INDUSTRY

402 SHERMAN ST. SE • P. O. BOX 2537 • DECATUR, AL 35602 / 800-648-5381 / 256-350-3500 / www.NorthAlabama.org / www.amla4tourism.com / Info@NorthAlabama.org
[3rd Quarter, 2025-2026]

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2026 PEAK AWARD NOMINATIONS OPEN

Each year, the PEAK Awards recognize the people, places and programs that go the extra mile to move North Alabama’s tourism industry forward. From the frontline staff who create memorable guest experiences to the organizations that continually innovate and lead, this is our chance to shine a light on excellence in our industry.

We invite you to nominate deserving peers in the following categories:

- Outstanding Attraction
- Event of the Year
- Organization of the Year
- Tourism Professional of the Year
- Friend of Tourism
- Travelwriter/Media of the Year

More than a recognition, the awards are a celebration of the dedication, creativity and passion that fuel our region’s tourism success. Whether you’re nominating a colleague, a partner organization, or your own team, your voice helps elevate and inspire others across our 16-county footprint.

Deadline to nominate is August 3, 2026. Award winners will be announced at AMLA’s Annual Meeting in Decatur on September 24, 2026.



Scan to download the nomination form.

AMLA TAKES ACCESSIBILITY TECHNOLOGY TOUR ACROSS NORTH ALABAMA

Over the past several weeks, AMLA has been traveling across the region, delivering innovative tools designed to enhance the visitor experience for travelers with disabilities to attractions, museums and tourism partners as part of its ongoing commitment to making North Alabama a more accessible-friendly destination.



As part of the commitment, AMLA recently donated Meta Smart Glasses to several regional attractions. Funding from Alabama’s Mountains, Rivers and Valleys Resource Conservation & Development Council (AMRV RC&D) made it possible to provide the technology to the U. S. Space and Rocket Center, Alabama Veterans Museum, EarlyWorks Children’s Museum, Jesse Owens Museum, Cook Museum of Natural Science, Scottsboro Boys Museum, Evelyn Burrow Museum and Little River Canyon Center. A separate grant from Northwest Resource Conservation & Development Council (Northwest RC&D) funded the Meta Smart Glasses donation to the Birthplace of Helen Keller. These devices offer hands-free access to information, audio descriptions, navigation assistance and content creation opportunities that can help make attractions more accessible and engaging for visitors.

Renona Seibert, AMRV RC&D executive director, stated, “We’re really excited to be part of this initiative. At AMRV RC&D, our whole thing is connecting people to the resources and experiences that make North Alabama special, and that includes making sure everyone can actually get out there and enjoy it. Supporting accessible wheelchairs and Meta glasses just made sense. If we can help one more family, one more kid, experience something they otherwise couldn’t — that’s exactly why we do what we do.”

“Northwest RC&D gladly agreed to partner with AMLA to assist with the accessibility project to provide five pairs of Meta Smart Glasses to be used at Helen Keller’s Birthplace by persons having vision limitations. Hopefully, this will make their experience even better,” stated Lauranne James, Executive Director of Northwest RC&D.

By investing in innovative technology and partnering with local attractions, AMLA continues to advance its vision of making North Alabama a welcoming destination where travelers with disabilities can experience the region’s rich history, outdoor recreation, arts and cultural attractions with greater ease and independence.

“This initiative is an important way for us to give back to our communities and expand accessibility for visitors and residents across North Alabama. A special thank you to TARCOG in helping to expediate the process and coordinate efforts to secure the grants,” said AMLA President & CEO Tami Reist.



[A NOTE FROM TAMI]

FROM BIRTHDAY WISH TO LASTING IMPACT: SERENITY'S STORY

Serenity Hartman is a 16-year-old girl with a dream, a dream to be a junior ranger.

Much of her life has been spent in the hospital with very little opportunity to experience the outdoors. For her sixteenth birthday, her mother, Judith, brought her to Joe Wheeler State Park (JWSP), hoping to give her a meaningful outdoor experience. What happened next became more than a birthday celebration; it became the beginning of a movement.

With the support of dedicated park staff, including JWSP Naturalist Jennings Earnest, Serenity was given access to something truly life-changing: a mobile terrain vehicle, generously provided through a grant from the Tennessee Valley Authority. Unlike anything used before, this specialized TerrainHopper allowed Serenity to navigate trails that had previously been out of reach for her. For the first time, she could fully experience the outdoors, and not from the sidelines, but immersed in it. Her birthday was unforgettable.

This story was shared by Mr. Earnest with Matthew Capps, Director of Alabama State Parks, and it has sparked something bigger. Inspired by Serenity's experience, the story was passed along to partners, including me which help secure the grant from TVA for the TerrainHopper. I shared the story with leaders within TVA and thanks to advocates like Jori Chatman and Lauren Pelton the impact continued to grow. The story reached even more decision-makers, and today, another mobile terrain vehicle is being secured for Lake Guntersville State Park.



When I spoke with her mother, as she was taking Serenity to a doctor's appointment, she said something that perfectly captures the WHY: "To be able to get out on those trails, to hear the birds, to see the rabbits, to feel that peace, even for a moment, you don't realize what that means."

That is why accessibility matters. That is why the work AMLA is doing matters. And that is why we must continue pushing forward ensuring that when we build trails, design attractions and create experiences, we are thinking of all aspects, including the equipment to meet the needs.

Let's make Alabama's trails the very best they can be for people with disabilities.

Tami Reist

Tami Reist, President & CEO

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends and Partners,

As we continue building momentum for tourism across North Alabama, I encourage everyone to mark their calendars for our Annual Meeting on September 24th in Decatur. This gathering is always a great opportunity to connect with industry partners, celebrate successes, and discuss the opportunities ahead for our region.

One of the exciting directions shaping our future is our commitment to making North Alabama an increasingly accessible and welcoming destination for all travelers. By continuing to invest in inclusive tourism, we are positioning North Alabama as a destination that truly offers something for everyone while creating new opportunities for growth across our communities.

Chad Davis

Chad Davis, AMLA Chair



Tami Reist



Chad Davis

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AFFILIATE GROUPS:

Southeast Tourism Society, AGLOW, Professional Outdoor Media Association, Alabama Destination Marketing Organization, Alabama Hospitality Association, Alabama Travel Council, IITA, Appalachian Regional Commission, US Travel Assn., NTA, TravelAbility, Leave No Trace, Harvest Host, Tennessee River Valley Council, Destination International

NORTH ALABAMA COUNTIES SERVED BY AMLA:

Blount, Cherokee, Colbert, Cullman, DeKalb, Etowah, Franklin, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Morgan, Winston

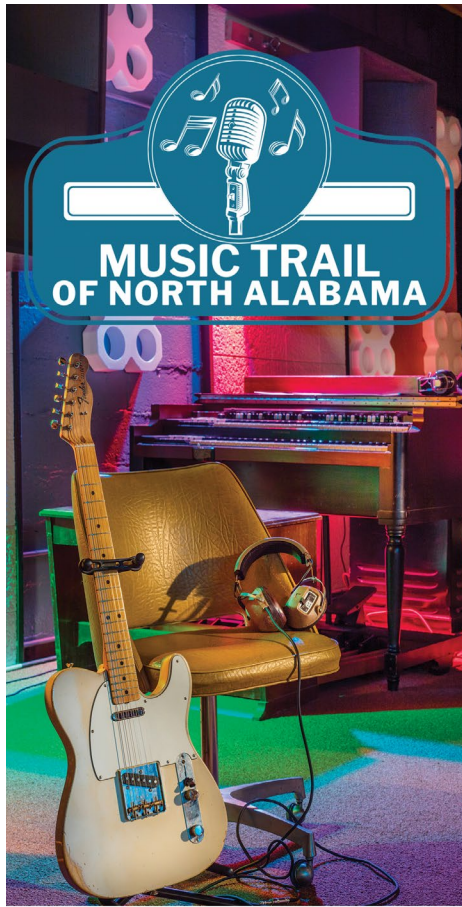
NEW MUSIC TRAIL OF NORTH ALABAMA LAUNCHES WITH 27 STOPS CELEBRATING THE SOUNDS THAT SHAPED A REGION

AMLA has developed and released a new trail highlighting recording studios, landmarks, music venues and more that shaped generations of musicians. From the legacy of Muscle Shoals to today's dynamic live music scenes, the Music Trail of North Alabama offers a self-guided tour of 27 must-visit music-related stops across AMLA's 16-county region.

The Music Trail of North Alabama joins AMLA's 11 existing trails and is part of the organization's overall initiative to attract visitors while spotlighting North Alabama's deep and diverse musical roots. Locations on the trail include legendary studios such as FAME Studios and Muscle Shoals Sound Studio, the recently renovated Renaissance Shoals Hotel & Spa where guest rooms pay tribute to the Shoal's music heritage, the Red Bay Museum, home to a spotlight exhibit honoring country music icon Tammy Wynette, who spent part of her childhood in Red Bay; Huntsville's Orion Amphitheater, one of the South's premier outdoor music venues; and the Little Richard mural, celebrating the energetic artist's ties to the region. Marketing materials produced for the trail include a brochure, exhibitor backdrop, giveaways, digital passport and dedicated webpage.

The new brochure is a handy guide to iconic recording studios, historic landmarks, intimate live music venues, vibrant festivals and the hometowns to visit in the 16 northernmost counties of North Alabama. Listings in the brochure contain a description, address, phone number and website so travelers can easily plan a visit.

Feel free to stop by the AMLA office located at 402 Sherman Street SE in Decatur Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to pick up copies or contact your Membership Services Representative (Leslee Herrington 256-777-1648, Mickie Collier 256-309-1127 or Josh Dalberto 256-656-2603) to arrange delivery. An electronic version may be downloaded from <https://amla4tourism.com/downloads/> under the AMLA Brochures section.



www.NorthAlabama.org

| 800-648-5381 |

ALABAMA MOUNTAIN LAKES TOURIST ASSOCIATION

Along with the brochure, AMLA has created a digital passport to serve as an additional guide to unforgettable musical experiences found throughout the North Alabama region. To implement the program, AMLA has partnered with Bandwango, an industry leader in digital destination experiences. Bandwango's web-based platform allows locals and visitors to access their pass instantly via smartphone, with no app to download and no physical card to carry. Upon registration, passports are delivered immediately via text message and email.

The digital passport enhances the visitor experience by providing hours of operation, phone numbers, maps, directions, and near-me functionality, making it easy to discover nearby



Music Trail of North Alabama

- View information and locations of 23 iconic studios and museums, intimate music venues, vibrant festivals in North Alabama
- Instantly delivered via text and email
- Mobile exclusive
- When visiting participating locations, simply ensure your location service is turned on to check-in via GPS.
- Check in at 12 venues and earn a free prize from your friends at Visit North Alabama

FREE

Sign Up

Learn More

stops and encouraging further exploration of the region. Those who check in at least 12 participating stops will earn a free prize from Visit North Alabama, adding an extra incentive to experience more of North Alabama's musical heritage.



Scan QR code to obtain the Music Trail of North Alabama passport.

"The Music Trail of North Alabama brings our region's

incredible music story to life in a way that is both immersive and easy to explore," said Karen Beasley, AMLA vice president of marketing and communications. "The new trail connects locals and visitors to the places, people and communities behind the music while encouraging them to experience more of what makes North Alabama such a meaningful and memorable destination."

AMLA LAUNCHES 2026 SWING AWAY NORTH ALABAMA GOLF CHALLENGE



Swing Away North Alabama Golf Challenge

- Mobile exclusive
- Instantly delivered via text and email
- No apps to download
- When visiting participating golf courses, simply ensure your location service is turned on to check-in via GPS
- Check-in at five courses and win a prize!

FREE

Sign Up

Learn More

AMLA is excited to announce the launch of the Swing Away North Alabama Golf Challenge, a new digital golf pass designed to drive visitation, increase rounds of play and showcase North Alabama as a note-worthy golf destination.

Launched earlier this year, the free program invites golfers to sign up for a mobile-friendly digital pass and to complete the challenge to earn a free prize from AMLA. The new digital passport available via Bandwango, highlights 12 golf courses that are members of AMLA located throughout North Alabama. Before or during a visit to North Alabama, visitors can sign

up for the digital passport from <https://www.northalabama.org/things-to-do/sports-recreation/golf/>. Bandwango will then send a passport link to the user's phone providing convenient access during their trip. Those checking in at 5 locations will earn a free prize from AMLA.

From world-renowned Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail experiences and stunning Appalachian scenery to courses offering challenges for all skill levels and exceptional value, the challenge invites golfers to explore North Alabama while pairing great golf with rich local culture, music history and outdoor adventures like fishing and hiking.

"North Alabama is home to three of the world-renowned Robert Trent Jones Golf Course and offers an incredibly diverse golf experience, with courses set among rolling foothills, lakeshores and vibrant communities," said AMLA President/CEO Tami Reist. "The Swing Away North Alabama Golf Challenge makes it easier than ever for golfers to discover new courses, plan multi-course trips and experience the hospitality that makes our region special while providing our members with a powerful tool to increase visitation and track impact."

To implement the program, AMLA has partnered with Bandwango, an industry leader in digital destination experiences. Bandwango's web-based platform allows golfers to access their pass instantly via smartphone, with no app to download and no physical card to carry. Upon registration, passports are delivered immediately via text message and email.

The mobile passport enhances the golfer experience by providing easy access to hours of operation, phone numbers, maps, directions, and near-me functionality, encouraging exploration and repeat play across North Alabama.

AMLA WELCOMES HANNAH DAVIS AS THE NEW GRAPHIC DESIGNER

AMLA is pleased to announce the organization has hired Hannah Davis as a graphic designer. The position works closely with Vice President of Marketing and Communications Karen Beasley in developing and implementing creative assets and content for marketing needs across all brands affiliated with the organization in an effort to position the North Alabama region as a must-experience destination. She assumed her new responsibilities April 30, 2026.



Hannah Davis

Davis has five years of graphic design experience, bringing a keen eye for visual storytelling to help showcase the beauty, culture and adventures of North Alabama. A graduate of Athens State University with a focus in Graphic Design and studies in Studio Fine Art, her background in body artistry, art history and psychology provides a design approach that is both technically precise and creatively driven.

Davis currently resides in Decatur, Ala. and when she is not designing, she enjoys spending time with her family. She can be reached by email at hannah@northalabama.org or via phone at 256-616-2207.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

September 24
DoubleTree by Hilton in Decatur

More information to come!



AMLA ISSUES ACCESSIBILITY GRANTS

AMLA is pleased to announce all 16 counties submitted a proposal for the new Accessibility Advancement Grant program. The purpose of the grant program is to encourage local tourism bureaus to identify and complete small-scale projects that make North Alabama more inclusive and welcoming for visitors with disabilities.

The \$500 grant is to be used only for accessibility-related improvements or initiatives geared to individuals with physical, sensory, or cognitive needs.

Grants approved :

- Blount County: Installation of a sign and fencing for the Happy Trails of the Locust Fork property.
- Cherokee County: New wheelchair-accessible swing at Mouth Park playground within Little River Canyon National Preserve.
- Colbert County: Develop Braille Brochures for Birthplace of Helen Keller Museum.

- Cullman County: Purchase modular accessibility ramps for use at festivals and special events.
- DeKalb County: Purchase new wheelchair-accessible swing at Mouth Park playground within Little River Canyon National Preserve.
- Etowah County: Install new ADA-compliant handrail at the Gadsden Museum of Art.
- Franklin County: Purchase a WEYRAL Electric Wheelchair for the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce office.
- Jackson County: Install three new instructional signs at the accessible boat ramp within Goose Pond Colony.
- Lauderdale County: Replace outdated, damaged, or non-compliant accessible parking signage outside the Florence-Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau office.
- Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce: Installation of two ADA-compliant sinks featuring touchfree, motion-activated faucets at the Oakville Indian Mounds Museum.
- Limestone County: Design a new accessibility webpage for visitathensal.com.
- Madison County: Installation of automatic door openers at front doors of the Huntsville/Madison County CVB office.
- Marion County: Make enhancements to its website that improve the digital experience for individuals with disabilities.
- Marshall County: Develop Top 10 Instagrammable spots campaign with signage at each location in braille and be ADA compliant.
- Morgan County: Create a sensory friendly space in the Decatur Morgan County Visitor's Center.
- Winston County: Build a permanent, wide ramp in front of The Lodge.

ZARTICO INSIGHTS: APRIL 2026 VISITOR DATA FOR NORTH ALABAMA

Key Insights:

North Alabama's top visitor origin markets in April 2026 continued to reflect

strong regional draw, with Birmingham-Anniston-Tuscaloosa holding the top position at 17% of visitors, up from 16% the prior year. Nashville maintained a solid presence at 7%, consistent with the prior year at 8%. Huntsville-Decatur-Florence came in at 7%, compared to 9% the year prior, which is worth monitoring as a local market to better understand travel motivations and barriers. Atlanta also represented 7% of visitors, consistent with 8% the prior year, affirming its role as a reliable feeder market for the destination.

From a spending perspective, Birmingham-Anniston-Tuscaloosa led at 12% of visitor spend, holding steady with the prior year (12%). Atlanta represented the second-highest spend market at 6%, down from 8%. Nashville came in at 5% of visitor spend, compared to 7% the prior year, which is an area worth exploring to understand whether visitors from that market are shifting their spending patterns.

Accommodations Markets Reflect Broader Regional Opportunity

When looking at which markets are visiting and also staying overnight, Birmingham-Anniston-Tuscaloosa led accommodation visitation at 11%, compared to 9% the prior year, a positive year-over-year increase. Atlanta represented 7% of accommodation visitors, down from 8%, and Nashville came in at 5%, down from 6%. Chattanooga also appeared in the top accommodation markets at 3%, which is a market worth continued attention as a growing overnight audience.

Food and Beverage Leads Visitor Activity

Food and Beverage remained the top category for both visitor activity in April 2026. It represented 33% of visitors by category (compared to 38% the prior year). While the share has shifted slightly, Food and Beverage remains the clear anchor experience for visitors to North Alabama. Retail held steady as the second-highest visitor category at 32% (compared to 31%), and Outdoor

Recreation grew to 18% of visitors, up from 12% the prior year, a notable 6-point increase that reflects growing interest in nature-based experiences in the region.

What This Means

The April 2026 data tells a positive story about North Alabama's continued regional relevance and growing out-of-state reach. The destination is drawing visitors from key markets including Birmingham, Atlanta, Nashville, and Chattanooga. Outdoor Recreation's jump to 18% of visitor activity is particularly meaningful, as it reflects a growing consumer appetite for nature-based and restorative travel experiences. These are strengths to build on heading into the peak summer travel season.

Recommendation

North Alabama is well-positioned to capitalize on one of the clearest travel trends heading into summer 2026: the rise of short, outdoor-focused road trips from nearby drive markets. According to Yahoo Travel's Summer 2026 Travel Trends report, Hilton research found that 71% of Americans plan to drive on their next vacation, and 61% prefer not to go more than five hours without stopping. Additionally, Airbnb reported that interest in U.S. national parks and outdoor experiences is up 35%, making nature and outdoor activities the top booked experience category for 2026.

Given North Alabama's Outdoor Recreation growth (up 6 points year over year) and its strong base of drive-market visitors from Birmingham, Atlanta, and Nashville, the destination has a meaningful opportunity to develop targeted summer campaigns positioned around the region's outdoor assets, including hiking, waterways, scenic byways, and natural spaces. A campaign framed around the "easy road trip reset" narrative aligns directly with where traveler mindset is heading this summer and could support both visitation and overnight stay growth from these key markets.



AMLA AWARDS TOP TOURISM PITCHES DURING APRIL QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING

Creativity was at the forefront during the April quarterly board meeting with the return of the annual “Pitching for Promotional Dollars” contest. Six competitors from across North Alabama stepped up to deliver their best ideas for promoting tourism in their communities. Taking top honor and the \$1,500 grand prize was Harmony Heard with Cullman County Tourism for Culinary Cullman Restaurant Week. Pryor Field Airport Authority for North Alabama Airfest secured second place, earning \$750 for their engaging and well-executed presentation.

Rounding out the top three was Holistic

Performance Group for a new Flawless Leaders class who took home \$500 for their compelling pitch.

“This contest showcases the passion and ingenuity of our tourism professionals,” said AMLA’s Tami Reist. “It’s always inspiring to see the creative ways our members are working to promote the unique attractions that make North Alabama a destination.”

THE NUMBERS ARE IN

During National Travel and Tourism Week May 3-9, the Alabama Tourism Department released its 2025 Alabama

Tourism Economic Report. In the 16 northernmost counties of Alabama that comprise the North Alabama region, the travel industry continues to be a vital economic engine. In 2025, the travel industry generated a \$4.9 billion economic impact and supported 50,633 jobs. Of the 16 counties, five counties (Blount, Cherokee, Cullman, Franklin and Winston) experienced double-digit growth over 2024.

“Tourism plays a critical role in strengthening North Alabama’s economy while connecting visitors to the people, places and experiences that define our region,” said AMLA President and CEO Tami Reist. “National Travel and Tourism Week is an opportunity to celebrate that impact and continue building a more welcoming and accessible destination for visitors.”

TEAM ALABAMA HOLDS DC SUMMIT

In May, a group of 11 frontline tourism leaders from Alabama held meetings in Washington, DC with their congressional delegation and federal partners to talk about the issues that matter to their communities. Among the issues discussed were the America the Beautiful Act, funding for the National Scenic Byways program, expanding accessibility, and support for the Appalachian Regional Commission. The group also provided a look at the events and programming Alabama communities have developed to celebrate America 250.

The Alabama Washington Summit was particularly meaningful as it was held during National Travel and Tourism Week, giving them an opportunity to talk about not just tourism’s economic impact but also how it is building stronger, more resilient, and livable communities.

The photo below is Team Alabama with the National Park Service’s tourism chief, Donnie Leadbetter, at the Department of the Interior. As Congress faces a looming deadline for the end of the 119th Congress in December, pressure is on to get things done, which is why this is a pivotal time to be speaking up about the policies and programs that impact the economic



NATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURISM Week
MAY 3-10, 2026

Tourism fuels our economy, supports thousands of jobs, and helps build a stronger North Alabama and Alabama.

The Impact in NORTH ALABAMA

- \$4.9 BILLION** were spent in 2025 by visitors to North Alabama
- 50,633** direct and indirect jobs are the result of this tourism to our region
- \$725** saved on taxes for every Alabama household because of this spending

The Impact Across ALABAMA

- 29+** MILLION VISITORS
- \$24.9** BILLION IN EXPENDITURES
- 255,780** JOBS SUPPORTED
- \$1.4** BILLION GENERATED IN STATE & LOCAL TAXES

Thank You, Travelers! From local restaurants and small businesses to outdoor adventures and cultural attractions, tourism supports the places we love and the people who make them special.

EXPLORE MORE. SUPPORT LOCAL. CELEBRATE NORTH ALABAMA. You're part of something BIG.

AMLA’s “Under the Sun, Moon, & Stars” video will be shown on United Airlines in flight entertainment programming during July 2026, in honor of Disability Awareness Month.



AMLA VIDEOS EARN TOP HONORS FROM AMERICAN ADVERTISING FEDERATION NORTH ALABAMA

AMLA is celebrating a major achievement after two videos from its “Access Your Next Adventure” campaign received top honors at the American Advertising Awards Gala held earlier this year.

The campaign, designed to showcase North Alabama’s welcoming spirit and diverse travel experiences, earned multiple awards across the professional competition. To be eligible for the February awards gala, entries had to be released during the 2025 calendar year.

The video “Under the Sun, Moon, & Stars: Accessible North Alabama with Wonders Within Reach” received a Gold ADDY Award and the prestigious Mosaic Award, which recognizes companies and individuals demonstrating a strong commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion through creative work, advocacy and organizational initiatives.

In addition, “Phoenix Travels” earned a Gold ADDY Award and was named Best of Show, the competition’s highest distinction. The honor was selected from all professional entries across every medium, highlighting the exceptional creativity and impact of the campaign.

For both videos, credits go to: Phil Woodall, Director, The Library of; Bethany Collins, Producer, The Library of; Leslie Walker, Talent Coordinator, Leslie Walker Consulting; Tami Reist, Executive Producer, AMLA; Jonathan Powell, Camera Operator, The Library of; Adam Vaden, Camera Operator, The Library of; Sophie Young, Editor, The Library of.

“We’re incredibly proud of the recognition these videos received,” said AMLA President/CEO Tami Reist. “The Access Your Next Adventure campaign was created to highlight the incredible experiences available throughout North Alabama while ensuring travelers with disabilities feel invited to explore our region. Seeing this work honored at such a high level is both exciting and rewarding.”

The 2025 American Advertising

Awards competition, conducted annually by the American Advertising Federation (AAF) North Alabama, is a prestigious contest that celebrates creative excellence in advertising and marketing. This local competition serves as the first stage of a three-tier national contest, offering North Alabama creatives the chance to showcase their work on a national stage.

Entries were reviewed by an esteemed jury of industry leaders, including: John Weiss, founder of Human Design; Elka Olsen Carroll, a Dallas-based Writer and Creative Director; Joel Wheat, Creative Director and Brand Executive at Salesforce.



Cullman County Tourism Bureau’s Harmony Heard represented the North Alabama Hallelujah Trail at the Religious Conference Management Association national conference, EMERGE, held in Lexington earlier this year.

Don't Miss it!

EXCITING 206-PAGE GUIDE

Take the Drive on I-65

WHERE EVERY EXIT HAS A STORY

Where Every Exit has a Story

THE NEWEST OFFERING FROM AUTHOR CONNIE PEARSON

Covers every mile of the interstate from Mobile, Alabama to Chicago, Illinois.

275+ Attractions, destinations, restaurants, and quirky surprises.

Colorful Photos.

5.5"x8.5" Paperback book.

Available on Amazon and IngramSpark.

Pre-order sale price \$10 per book plus tax and shipping.

Author Connie Pearson (left) with AMLA CEO/President Tami Reist.

Order Now

Take the Drive on I-65 is a joint venture between Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association and travel writer Connie Pearson. In addition to Take the Drive on I-65, Connie has also written over 300 travel articles and three travel-related books.

HOW TO ORDER

Individual books are available on Amazon and IngramSpark. Discounted bulk orders may be made through the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association

Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association

Email: Tami Reist | Tami@NorthAlabama.org
Cell: 256-318-4446

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[NORTH ALABAMA HAPPENINGS]



AMLA's Karen Beasley, along with the Alabama Tourism Department staff and tourism professionals from across the state, recently attended IPW, the largest international inbound travel trade show in the United States. Throughout the week, the team participated in appointments and meetings with international travel buyers, tour operators and media representatives from around the world to showcase the destinations, experiences and hospitality that make Alabama unique.



AMLA's Leslee Herrington represented North Alabama at the St. Louis RV Travel Show in January.



Jackson County's Lydia Fielder and AMLA's Angie Pierce promoted North Alabama at the Louisville Boat, RV, Sport Show in January.

UPCOMING EVENTS

STATE, REGIONAL & NATIONAL TOURISM EVENTS

- **TBEX**
June 23-26, Richmond, VA
- **Alabama Press Association**
June 25-27, Orange Beach, AL
- **Governor's Conference on Tourism**
July 12-15, Florence, AL
- **EDAA Summer Conference**
July 19-22, Fairhope, AL
- **Destination International**
July 21-23, Portland, OR
- **ACCC**
August 18-20, Orange Beach, AL
- **Brand USA Travel Week**
September 28-October 1, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

AMLA MEMBER EVENTS

- **AMLA Board & Membership Meeting**
July 28, 2026, Bear Creek Collaborative, Hodges, AL
- **AMLA Annual Meeting**
September 24, 2026, DoubleTree by Hilton, Decatur, AL
- **Social Media Webinar**
August 18, 2026

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

February 2026-May 2026

- Allman Farms and Orchards – Oneonta
- Bel Haven Heights Gifts – Red Bay
- Charlie B's – Oneonta
- Clarion Pointe - Decatur
- Coldwater Seed & Supply – Tuscumbia
- Driftwood Family Campground – Cedar Bluff
- Gadsden Public Library - Gadsden
- Gabriela's Latin Fusion – Athens
- Higher Ground Cabins – Moulton
- Leesburg Country Store - Leesburg
- Madison Fair Hotel II – Madison
- MidCity District – Huntsville
- OmniPlex - Cullman
- Possum Emporium - Menton
- Rock the South – Decatur
- SkyDog: The Shoals Experience – Florence
- The Carriage (Florence Wine Fest) - Florence
- The Pink Pig – Moulton
- Town of Falkville – Falkville
- Truskers Far Venue – Tuscumbia
- Two Sisters Square – Scottsboro
- West Blount Corn Maze – Warrior

**Thank You Reinstated
Members**