



WELCOME VISITORS:

Hilton Head Island offers so much

If you're reading this, there's a good chance you're a visitor to our community. Let me be among the first to say, "Welcome." You made a great decision in choosing Hilton Head Island!

Summer is our community's busiest tourist season, and as one of the most popular activities for visitors, we here at the Arts Center are always pleased to greet locals, newcomers, annual visitors and seasonal occupants.

Our visitorship grows every year. In 2009-2010 alone, 23 percent of the 58,107 people who attended Arts Center programs were overnight visitors. That's nearly 13,100 people! Our estimated economic impact for that year – using Visitor & Convention Bureau conversion factors – was \$18,558,461 to the local economy.

So we certainly understand the importance of tourism. We welcome visitors from all over the country and the world on a daily basis. Our website experiences unique visits outside the United States from Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, China, Japan, Greece, Australia and Brazil. And when we started online ticket sales in the fall of 2009, one of the first purchases was from a customer in England.

That was a reminder to all of us here that our little island is a dream destination on this continent and far beyond.

But we're not selfish. While you're staying with us, we hope that you enjoy all the island has to offer. There's a reason why many of our local residents started out as visitors, just like a lot of you. Hilton Head Island has a way of drawing you back, year after year.

Take restaurants, for instance. Hilton Head Island might be small, but when it comes to a

good meal, its options are plentiful. Just look at these partner sponsors ...

In the mood for seafood? Try Steamer Seafood, the Black Marlin, Red Fish or Old Oyster Factory. If pizza is more your thing, take a trip to Giuseppi's. For cool faire, try WiseGuys, Philly's Café & Deli or Parrot Cove.

Want a more laid-back atmosphere? You can find great wine at Hilton Head Wine & Spirit Shop or Alexander's and the tasty beer at Growlers craft beer & ales. Christine's Café offers lots of home-cooked favorites.

Close the night and sample great Italian at Antonio's, Michael Anthony's or Flora's Italian Café, or take a trip to the Southwest at Santa Fe Café. And, if you have the munchies, day or night, Hilton Head Diner is always open.

You can find out more about our partners by flipping through your OnCenter. This magazine in your hands is not just a guide to everything that is happening at the Arts Center, it's also a portal into the island as a whole.

From galleries to golf, beaches to biking or dolphin tours to fishing charters, or miles of pristine beaches, it's no wonder Hilton Head Island remains one of the top tourist destinations, year after year.

With so much to do, see, eat and experience, it's no wonder the crowds always leave smiling! We appreciate you sharing a night of your vacation with us here at the Arts Center, and we hope to see you again.

Kathleen P. Bateson, President/CEO